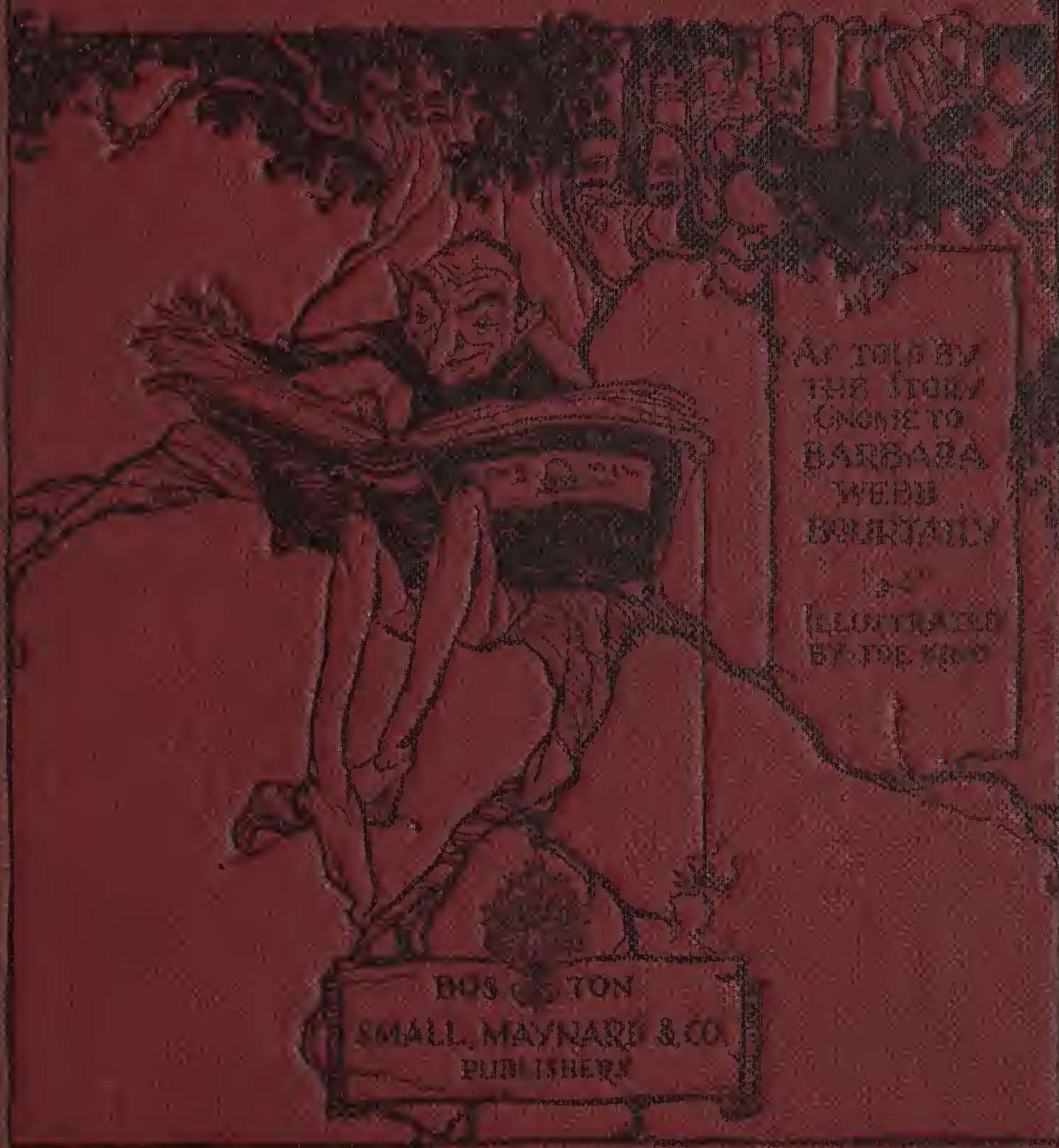


MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS



AS TOLD BY
THE STORY
GONE TO
BARBARA
WEBB
BOUNTAIN

ILLUSTRATED
BY JOE KIM

EDS. COTTON
SMALL, MAYNARD & CO.
PUBLISHERS



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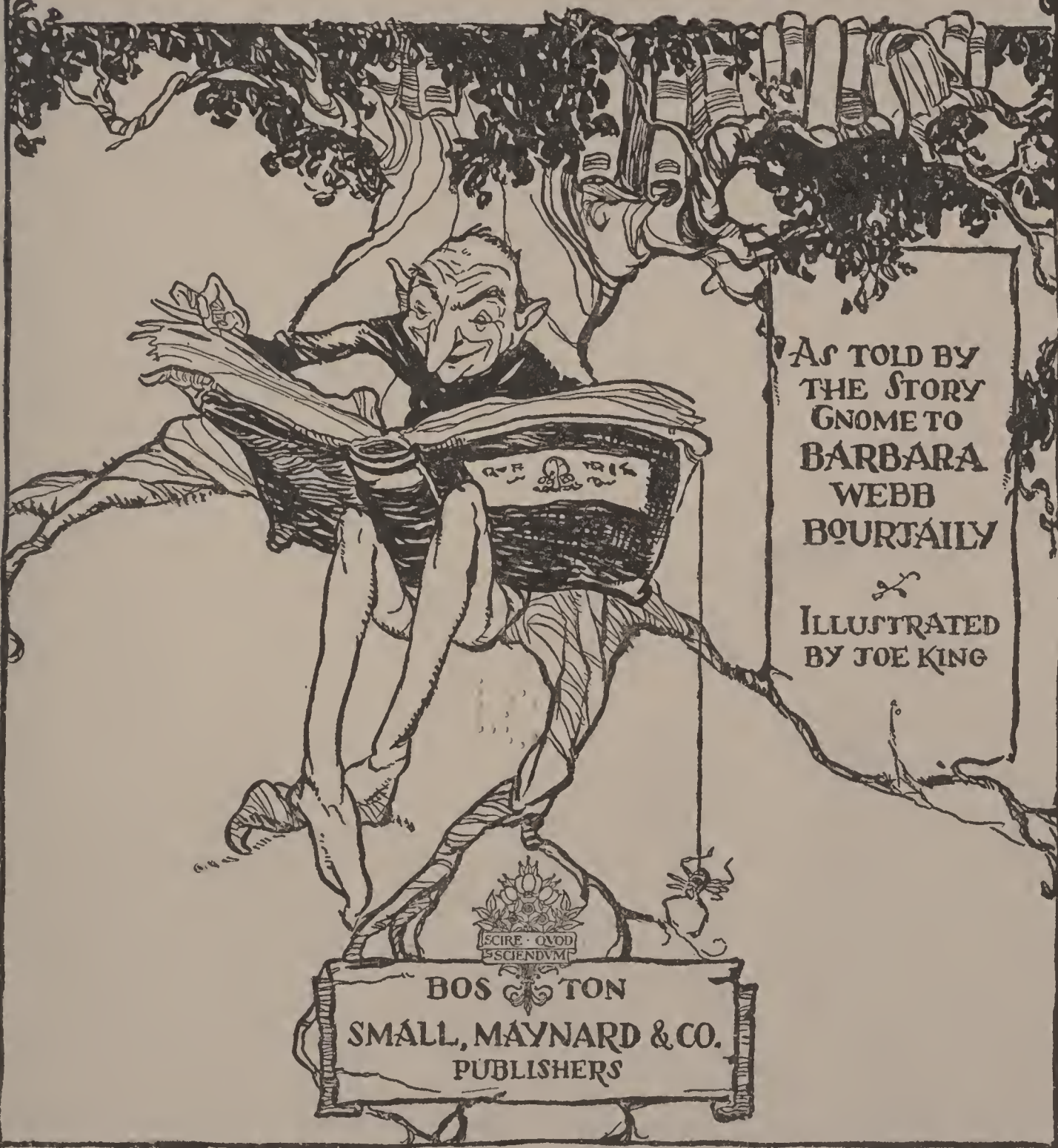
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MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

Webb, Barbara

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS



AS TOLD BY
THE STORY
GNOME TO
BARBARA
WEBB
BOURTAILLY

ILLUSTRATED
BY JOE KING



BOSTON
SMALL, MAYNARD & CO.
PUBLISHERS

25-20435

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Printed in the United States of America

PRINTED BY THE MURRAY PRINTING COMPANY
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

BOUND BY THE BOSTON BOOKBINDING COMPANY
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

SEP -2 1925

©C1A861670

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57-610 Paul

TO
“*THE THREE*”

JUNIOR

VANCE

PAUL

STORY GNOME

The Keeper of
the Magic Books
in the Silent
Library of the
Fairy Queen



When Fairyland became invisible and part of all the vanished past
The Queen called to her, Story Gnome—

“Now are we gone into the Magic Books at last,
With Evileye and Willowitch and all the fairy train
Nor will the Earth with Earthland eyes behold our forms again.
But here within these Magic Books we live throughout all Time
To frolic forth whenever called by any Proper Rhyme.
And you will guard these secrets close until that happy day
A loving wish will summon us to children, tired with play.”

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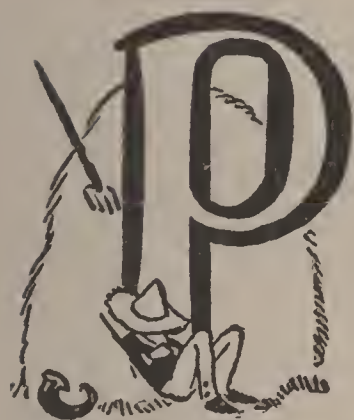
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MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

LITTLE BOY BLUE

*Little Boy Blue, come blow up your horn!
The sheep's in the meadows.
The cow's in the corn.
Where is the boy who looks after the sheep?
He's under the hay cock, fast asleep.*



PERHAPS you have wondered how Little Boy Blue happened to be asleep instead of watching his sheep as he was plainly expected to do. This tale of the famous nap was the first one Story Gnome brought me. He twinkled into my room one morning looking as though he knew a thousand delectable secrets. "Oh yes, I always do," he said, smiling at me.

"Do what?" I asked. For I hadn't spoken a word. I had smiled my good-morning.

"I always know a secret," he said. "And this is the very first one I have ever told. And no matter how many I tell, there will always be one secret more."

"It must be nice, always to know a secret," I said.

"It is," he agreed. "And this is the first one." And after reciting the rhyme above he told this tale.

It seems that one time in Fairyland there was a fairy family, all blue. There are, of course, green fairies, and

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

yellow fairies, and lavender fairies, all lovely. But the blue fairies are particularly lovely. And one day a dear little fairy boy came to live with Father and Mother Fairy Blue.

He was such a dear child, so dear that no one could think of a name as dear as himself. So in the course of time he came to be known as Little Boy Blue.

Now in the Fairy Kingdom every one is busy. And soon after fairy children are born they learn to be useful. Each one has a task which he must perform faithfully before he can be a grown fairy and go through Magicland to Earthland to visit Earth children like yourself and bring them good cheer.

So when Boy Blue was old enough for a task he was given a Woolly Sheep and a Friendly Cow to care for. Every morning he took them into the bright sunshine, and each night he led them to their beds of sweet-smelling hay. They were great friends, these three.

But even in the Fairy Kingdom there are unlovely things. Evileye, whose name in the elf tongue is Skyg, was one of them. He was a dour, sour fellow whose business was chasing smiles from people's faces. When he caught a smile he popped it into his little black bag and kept it there. He lived in Magicland, a country that lies between Earthland and Fairyland. And he longed to destroy the happy love that made Woolly Sheep and Friendly Cow and Boy Blue smile at each other so often. It wasn't nice of him, of course, but that was his nature.

One morning Evileye worked hard trying to chase the smiles from the faces of Boy Blue and his friends. But he did not catch a single smile.

So he went away for a while to think in the Magicland that lies on either side of the Fairy Kingdom. At last he



WHEN EVILEYE WENT BY, BOY BLUE TOOK THAT FAMOUS NAP

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

decided to spirit away Friendly Cow and Woolly Sheep who were of the Fairy Kind and put in their places an Earth Cow and Earth Sheep for Boy Blue. Earthland and Fairyland are both wonderful places, but they are so different that Earthland Cows and Sheep do not get on any better in Fairyland than Fairy Cows and Sheep do in Earthland.

So, one night when all the Fairy children were sleeping and their parents were busy with fairy concerns, Evileye spoke some magic words outside the house where Friendly Cow and Woolly Sheep were sleeping and they floated away to sleep for a long time in Magicland. Then he flew swiftly to Earthland and, with much tugging and pulling and pushing and leading, he brought Earth Cow and Earth Sheep to Boy Blue's barn.

In the morning Boy Blue ran to the barn to see his friends.

"Good-morning," he cried in the fairy tongue.

And instead of the soft "moo-moo" of Friendly Cow he heard a great loud "MOO" and a great swish of a tail and a great stamping of feet.

He was quite surprised, but cried a "good-morning" to Woolly Sheep.

And instead of the pleasant "Baa" of Woolly Sheep he heard a great goatlike "BAA" and an impatient butting of the Earthland sheep's head against the barn wall.

Boy Blue was quite worried, the more so as his fairy parents were away just then, and quite busy counting the seeds that were to go into the sunflower hearts on Earth that fall.

But he went bravely into the stalls and looked kindly into the great brown eyes of the Earthland cow. She was not a bad cow, but she was very hungry and she said to Boy Blue in a great loud voice:

"I want my breakfast."

Boy Blue was astonished, for you must know that Fairy-

LITTLE BOY BLUE

land people and animals eat only fairy meals and that all day long Woolly Sheep and Friendly Cow just stood in the sun in the green field and ate nothing at all. And at night they took the merest sip from a fairy brook and went happily to bed.

Boy Blue did not know what "breakfast" meant.

"I'm sorry, but I haven't any breakfast for you," he said.

"You haven't? Baa-d. Baa-d," cried Earthland Sheep.

And both he and Earth Cow looked quite angrily at Boy Blue.

"I'll let you into the field by the barn if you wish," he said. "Perhaps you will find breakfast there."

So he opened the door and Earth Cow and Earth Sheep rushed out most impolitely.

They fell upon the grass in the field before the barn and cropped it greedily. Then Cow looked up.

"My, my," she said to Earth Sheep. "Look what we are missing," and she pointed her front hoof at the lovely meadow that lay on the other side of the field. "And there, see the lush green corn."

"You may have the corn," said Earth Sheep. "I'll have some of that Four-Leafed Clover that grows in the meadow over there."

Then they both started for the more promising breakfast-land. Boy Blue ran after them,

"You mustn't go there," he said. "Please don't go there. Those fields belong to the Fairy Queen and no one ever goes in there to spoil her lovely fields. That one is a pop-corn field, you know, and the other is all Four-Leafed Clover."

But Cow and Sheep paid no heed and went stubbornly on. It was rude of them, of course, but then they were hungry and didn't understand Fairy ways, so we can't blame them much.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

Now Boy Blue began to suspect something was wrong. Evileye had made the Earth Cattle look just like Woolly Sheep and Friendly Cow, but of course he hadn't changed their dispositions any.

However, Boy Blue didn't have time to think and wonder. He ran in front of Earth Cow and headed her off. Then he ran in front of Earth Sheep and headed him off. By that time Cow had started toward the meadow again and Boy Blue trotted his short legs in front of her.

Poor Boy Blue. He trotted and he ran. He ran and he trotted. At first he chuckled, for it seemed a funny game, but at last he was so tired, and Cow was so hungry, and Sheep was so hungry that it just seemed he couldn't keep them out of those beautiful fields of pop-corn and clover any longer.

Just then his cousin, Tom Tucker the singer, came along. He had a large piece of white bread and butter in his hand, and when Boy Blue had gasped out his story Tom Tucker politely offered Earth Cow and Earth Sheep some bread and butter.

They were so hungry that they ate it, and while they had their heads down Tom cast a five-minute spell on them. All fairies can do this, but never when an animal is looking at them, so Boy Blue hadn't a chance to try it.

"Now you keep casting a five-minute spell on them for about an hour and I'll see what I can do to help," Tom told Boy Blue, and off he skipped with his magic skip to talk to his Godmother who was also Boy Blue's.

In a little time he was back.

"Godmother is bringing Friendly Cow and Woolly Sheep back," he said. "They were asleep in Magicland. And she will magic these Earth animals back home again. But she says that Evileye, who played this trick, must think it a suc-

LITTLE BOY BLUE

cess or he will try another one. So she will put Friendly Cow and Woolly Sheep in the meadow and the corn. They are very quiet and good and she will tell them not to stamp about or eat anything. Then when Evileye goes past at four o'clock he will think you have displeased the Queen and be off to bother some one else."

So into the meadow went Woolly Sheep, and into the pop-corn field went Friendly Cow. And while they stood there patiently, never moving, glad to help Boy Blue, whom they loved, our tired little lad took that famous nap. Those who saw him sleeping while his charges stood in the very places they should not be were told the story and always smiled kindly at Boy Blue and Woolly Sheep and Friendly Cow.

Boy Blue took them to their house when four o'clock was past and Evileye was intent on some other trick.

Earth Cow and Sheep were most hungry when they got home. But Farmer gave them some hay and they soon forgot their visit to Fairyland.



THE CAT AND THE FIDDLE

Hey diddle, diddle!
The Cat and the Fiddle
The Cow jumped over the Moon
The Little Dog laughed to see such Sport
And the Dish ran away with the Spoon.



T was only a few days after Story Gnome had brought me the story of Little Boy Blue from the silent library of the Fairy Queen that he came in with another tale. He had found this one too in the magic books. And he looked very tired, for this story was recorded in a forgotten tongue. It is the story of the Cat and the Fiddle, and truly happened in the faraway and long ago time.

You will notice if you read the rhyme above carefully that all the nouns are capitalized. That is because this story is of that strange land where all the forms of Ideas live and breathe and speak. Even the Idea of dishes and spoons and every common thing is alive. This is a deep thought which you will understand better when you are older and study philosophy and metaphysics. There are two lovely words for you to think about, as Alice did of Latitude and Longitude. Only the Story Gnome could have found this story, for the language of these life forms of Ideas is very strange and erudite. There, that is the last big word in this story.

It seems that Ideas often have a very hard time escaping



"QUICK", SAID WANT TO DISH AND SPOON, "QUICK, NOW.."

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

from Formland into the Earth where we live. We grope around for Ideas and need them terribly and finally our Wants get to Formland and if the Wants are earnest enough the Ideas come to Earth and we can use them.

A long time ago people got very tired of eating with their fingers. It was quite messy, especially on Sunday when they had their best clothes on. So one morning a wee little Want came into Formland looking for something to take the place of fingers in eating. Now the King of Formland does not like to let his Ideas go unless he is quite sure they will be used and not die of neglect on this Earth. So he examines the Wants very carefully before he lets an Idea go.

This Want seemed sure to die.

“Fingers were made before dishes and spoons,” said the King. “I don’t believe they will really use this Idea on earth. I think Dish and Spoon had better stay here.”

Next week the Want came back. He was much larger and quite sure that Dish and Spoon would be welcome on Earth. But the Form King said no.

Next week the Want came back and this time he was so big that he swaggered before Form King and demanded that the Idea of Dish and Spoon return to Earth with him.

Form King wasn’t feeling very well. He did not like swagger so he swore that Dish and Spoon should never go to Earth.

“Let them eat with their fingers from their tables or the floor or wherever they like,” he roared. “Dish and Spoon stay here with me.”

So the Want sat down to think. First he made himself very attractive. He became a lovely misty silver and rose in color. Then he went to see Dish and Spoon in their little House-Behind-The-Hill.

THE CAT AND THE FIDDLE

“How would you like to come to Earth with me?” he asked of Dish and Spoon.

“Is it all as pretty as you are?” asked Dish.

“No,” said Want, for he was a truthful fellow. “But it is very important. If you will come to Earth with me you will have a place in every home. You will be washed and cared for every day. You will grow into thousands of shapes and forms, some beautiful, some ugly, but all useful and all very important.”

“That would be nice,” said Spoon who was feminine and liked to feel important.

“But,” said Dish, “how can we go? Form King is unwilling and I have never known an Idea to escape that Form King wanted to stay here. Besides we would miss the party.”

You see Form King always gave his Ideas a great party to make them happy before he let them escape into the world, for he knew that often they were lonely and neglected for a long time after their arrival.

“I will give you such a reception on Earth that you will never regret missing the party here,” promised Want, making his lovely colors glow and dance in the breeze.

“Well, we will think about it,” promised Dish and Spoon. “Come back next week and we will let you know.”

So Want drifted back to Earth and was shocked all week by the sight of people eating with their fingers from ugly wooden trenchers that were terribly hard to keep clean.

When he returned to Formland he went straight to the King.

“Never,” shouted the King, getting red in the face. “And don’t you go trying to coax Dish and Spoon to run away either.” And he stamped his foot and looked very angry at Want.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

Want hastened away to the House-Behind-The-Hill. Before he went he made himself all silver and turquoise with a soft cloud for a scarf.

But when he came to the house behind the hill he was terribly surprised. For Little Dog barked and growled at him and tore a hole in the fleecy scarf before Want could get him quiet. Form King had put Little Dog there to guard Dish and Spoon.

But Want spoke softly and persuaded Little Dog to let him speak with Dish and Spoon, and as they spoke Earthtalk which Dish and Spoon had been studying all week, Little Dog did not understand what was going forward.

“We would like to go,” said Dish and Spoon. “But with Little Dog there ever so faithful we just can’t.”

“Perhaps I could bribe him,” said Want.

“Oh, no,” said Dish. “He is ever so faithful and he never sleeps.”

“I really want to go to Earth ever so badly,” said Spoon. “Besides it is tiresome here with Little Dog on guard. We never get to go out any more at all.”

So Want sat down to think. He thought a long time and he rose with quite a change in his appearance. In fact he was ugly and determined looking, sort of a dark brown with purple trimmings.

“Will you go if I fix it so that Little Dog does not bite you?” he asked.

“We will, we will,” they promised, just a little frightened by his dark appearance. Want hurried away to see Cat.

Cat had never loved Little Dog, in fact even then except under unusual circumstances, they were enemies.

Yes, Cat would dearly love to play a trick on Little Dog. Especially if it were a very smart trick.

THE CAT AND THE FIDDLE

Yes, Cat could play the Fiddle, though she knew only one tune, "Over the hills and far away."

"Fine," cried Want. "That's an ideal tune for our purpose. My plan is a very odd one. Is Cow your friend?"

"Indeed she is. I thank her daily for the milk she gives me," purred Cat.

"Now I have only to see Moon and the plan is ready," cried Want, and off he floated to talk to Moon and to learn how to mix silver and gold so they made a lovely costume which Want called Moonmist.

But here he met with an obstacle. Moon simply would not take a chance of having Cow knock off a bit from his rim as she sailed over. When he was at the quarter it would not be so bad, for his horns were sharp and she would be sure to jump high enough to clear their points. But while he was full as he was now he would never never let Cow or any one else try to jump over him.

So at last Want decided to wait a trying time until Moon was in his first quarter again.

All that time he had to look on the Earth People, growing more numerous every day, scooping up food from wooden platters with their fingers. Really it was dreadful. Sometimes the children even wiped their fingers on the front of their dresses and that was too awful to speak about.

So Want kept on thinking and planning and seeing the proper people until everything was all ready for his great experiment.

* * *

Little Dog lay snoozing on his paws in front of the House-Behind-The-Hill one night when he heard music. It was queer music he thought, as though some one were playing a fiddle close by. Up in the sky the Moon in her first quarter

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

rocked gently as though enjoying the music which seemed to be one tune played over and over. Little Dog was not fond of music but he found himself almost hypnotized by this dreamy tune played again and again on the Fiddle.

“It’s a pretty night,” he said half aloud. And that was remarkable, for Little Dog did not have an artistic soul.

Just then his dreaming had a shock. Up, up, over the Moon, trying to be graceful, rose Cow. Huge, awkward, four-legged, long-tailed, Cow.

It was too much. Little Dog threw back his head and howled with glee.

“Quick!” whispered Want to Dish and Spoon. “Quick! Now!”

They slipped through the door just as Little Dog gave an extra howl at Cow flirting her legs high to escape being hung on one horn of Moon.

Then up through the air floated Dish and Spoon hand in hand with Want in his moonmist dress.

They were warmly received on Earth as Want had promised them and are still quite happy and important here.

Little Dog ran to the King. But King, too, had laughed so hard at Cow jumping over the Moon that he forgave Little Dog and together they laughed at Cat who had hoped in this way to make King angry at Little Dog.

HICKORY DICKORY DOCK

Hickory, Dickory, Dock!
The mouse ran up the clock.
The clock struck One.
The mouse ran down.
Hickory, Dickory, Dock.



HERE was a twinkle in Story Gnome's eye the morning he flitted in with the story of Hickory Dickory Dock. It is just another of the thousand and one delectable secrets that Story Gnome knows. Isn't "delectable" a lovely word? And this is a very important story, because in it for the first time you meet Willowitch—Willowitch, whom all the fairies loved—and feared, just a little. She is an ugly old woman, but her heart is beautiful and her mind is wise.

It seems that off in a corner of the Fairy Queen's Library hangs a fair picture. It is of a young girl who is beautiful beyond words. I shall not try to tell you about her. Just imagine a person who made you think of Spring Wind; and a Clover Field in Summer; of a Thistle Seed floating in Autumn sunshine; and a Clear Night at Christmas time. She was lovelier than all these, lovely to look upon and with a spirit to grace her beauty. And best of all she was just a little naughty, just naughty enough to be lovable. But we'll get on with the story.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

This fair young girl was the daughter of Hickory Dickory Dock.

His friends often called him "Old Hick," though never to his face, for he was a terrible old fellow to see when he was angry. And he was very dignified.

He had sealed up his heart when his wife died and only unlocked the least little corner of it for Mignonette, his only child, the fair young girl of the picture in the Fairy Queen's Library.

But with this little friendly corner of his heart he loved Mignonette devotedly and was human enough to enjoy her naughtiness, as on the time when she put three lumps of sugar in the Cowslip Tea of a very fat and disagreeable person who had come to call and wished to reduce. Of course Old Hick scolded his daughter but he enjoyed this little joke a great deal in a quiet way.

In the course of time Mignonette grew up. Girls do, even in Fairyland. She had been very well educated and could make pillows of Milk-Weed Down, excellent Cowslip Tea, and a delicious as well as economical cake from Butternuts.

Old Hick was getting on in years and wished to see his daughter married. But he had peculiar ideas. He himself had been poor as a boy and he and Mignonette's mother had been very happy while they were poor. He did not have much of an opinion of princes, even though his friends told him that only a prince was worthy of Mignonette's beauty and talents.

So when one day Mignonette came in for tea with a prince she had met at the Court of the Fairy Queen, Old Hick frowned tremendously.

"Who was that fellow?" he bellowed at Mignonette when tea was over and the prince had flown home to dress for dinner.

"Only Prince Charming, Father," said Mignonette.



JOE KING

HE RAN SWIFTLY UP CLOCK AND SEIZING THE BELL HAMMER STRUCK "ONE."

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

“Never heard of him,” growled Old Hick.

“Oh, all the girls know him,” cried Mignonette. “Every friend I have dreams of Prince Charming.”

Old Hick looked mollified, for Mignonette’s friends were all sensible girls even if they were extremely pretty.

“Can’t say that I like him,” he grumbled, however. “I’ve asked Sandalson, the Woodcutter, here for dinner. Mind that you have plenty of Honey-pie for us tonight.”

Mignonette said nothing. But she felt very unhappy. She and Sandalson had played together from childhood. He was a dear simple fellow who adored Mignonette but wished to marry Matilda, the daughter of a neighboring woodcutter, a fine strong girl who loved him and who could tend the scorching fire that turned the great logs Sandalson felled to charcoal.

She knew that her father wished her to marry Sandalson and that Sandalson so feared her father’s wealth and power that he would never refuse her hand even though he ate his heart out for the comradely Matilda.

However, she set about making the Honey-pie and as she put on a dress of Midnight Blue sprinkled with real Star Dust she thought far more of Sandalson than of herself. For as yet she thought very little of Prince Charming. And she knew well how Matilda and Sandalson longed for each other.

That night when dinner was over, Sandalson sat timidly across the room from Hickory Dickory Dock while Mignonette sang sweetly of the summer night. The father leaned forward and spoke to the young woodcutter.

“Have you been thinking of getting married?” he asked.

Sandalson, who had been dreaming of Matilda, nodded and blushed.

“It is all right with me,” said Old Hick. “And what I want Mignonette wants too, don’t you, daughter?”

HICKORY DICKORY DOCK

Mignonette stopped singing.

“I will not marry Sandalson,” she said. Then she came and stood by her father. “Let me stay with you and keep your house. I love you and you love me, why must we think now of my marriage?”

Sandalson breathed a great sigh of relief. Surely this would settle everything and he could wed his Matilda. For he feared the rich and powerful Hickory Dickory Dock so much that he would never dare disobey any command the old man might give. But Mignonette was different. Sandalson looked gratefully at the girl.

Old Hickory Dickory glared at his daughter.

“You will marry Sandalson and that right soon,” he roared. “You shall not set foot from this house until you step forth to your wedding with Sandalson.”

Mignonette drew her lovely self to her very tallest and spoke through her little white teeth.

“I will not marry Sandalson.”

Old Hickory Dickory Dock looked very angry, and a little sad. For he loved his daughter and wished her happiness above all other things.

He sent Sandalson home and Mignonette to her room. Then he sat down to think.

Mignonette was clever. He must find some way of keeping her in the house or she would slip out and marry this Prince Charming or some other worthless fellow.

So off stepped Hickory Dickory Dock through the dark night to consult with Willowitch.

Willowitch is quite the ugliest person in the world. And most unfriendly.

Hickory Dickory Dock was not afraid but he spoke his business shortly.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

“I want a spell to keep my daughter in the house,” he said loudly.

Willowitch threw him a mouse.

“All women are afraid of these,” she said. “Put him in the doorway.”

“I must have something more,” said Hickory Dickory. “My daughter is very clever and very headstrong.”

“Like her father,” muttered Willowitch. “Here is a spell. Command the Clock never to strike one. Until the Clock strikes one, Mignonette is powerless to leave her room.”

Now while Hickory Dickory was about consulting Willowitch, Prince Charming was riding over the country on a Dappled Cloud.

He had been thinking of Mignonette with her voice that made him think of the Wind in Spring. So he turned his Cloud to her window and saw her there looking out very sad and mournful.

“What is it, Mignonette?” he asked softly, floating close to her casement.

“I am very unhappy,” said Mignonette. “I am not to leave this room until I go to marry Sandalson the Woodcutter. He will be very unhappy with me for a wife. I have never learned to tend the charcoal fire, and Sandalson really loves Matilda. Besides, I do not love Sandalson. Father is very cruel.”

“Could you learn to love me, Mignonette?” whispered Prince Charming.

Mignonette drew back from her window. Love Prince Charming? Go to live in his palace where the windows are made of Lovers’ Sighs and Dreams-Come-True?

“I do not know,” she faltered.

“Mignonette,” whispered the Prince. “Do you know what

HICKORY DICKORY DOCK

your name means? Little Darling. I shall call you that. Come, Mignonette, Little Darling, come with me on my Dappled Cloud.”

Mignonette stretched out her hand to his. But at that moment the spell began to work and she could not move from the room.

Prince Charming stayed until he heard Hickory Dickory Dock coming, then he flew away on his Dappled Cloud to his palace with the windows made of Lovers' Sighs and Dreams-Come-True.

Now began lonely days for Mignonette. At first she eyed Mouse all askance. But soon she came to love him and to talk with him and tell him all her troubles. Still she never tried to pass the doorway and Hickory Dickory Dock believed that, like all women, she feared Mouse.

Day by day Mignonette told Mouse her story and nightly he heard her whisper to Prince Charming, who came always on his Dappled Cloud.

“It's a shame,” said Mouse one day as he brushed his whiskers, pride of his heart, “that these two lovers should be parted. I haven't seen my family for a long time. I'll just go and visit them tonight and while I'm away Mignonette can join her lover and I'll say that I got tired of watching. Willowitch can't harm me, for I am of the Smooth People.”

So saying, he went off to visit his wife and play with the new baby.

But when he returned there sat Mignonette more forlorn than ever.

“Oh, Mouse, where have you been?” cried the fair young girl. “I have missed you so. I have been so lonely for you.”

“Why didn't you go with Prince Charming while I was away?” asked Mouse.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

“Alas, there is a spell upon me. Until the Clock strikes one, I can never leave this room. And the Clock has been bewitched.”

“I’ll soon fix that,” said Mouse. “Send for Prince Charming.”

So Mignonette sent a wish from her window through the dream windows of Prince Charming’s palace and in a moment he was at her side on his Dappled Cloud.

“Now,” cried Mouse.

He ran swiftly up Clock, and, seizing the bell hammer, struck “One,” quite loudly.

Mignonette stepped through the window to the Dappled Cloud. Mouse watched her sail away with Prince Charming and then curled up for a nap.

Hickory Dickory Dock was really relieved. He had grown tired of having Mignonette shut in her room and only kept her there to maintain his authority, for Sandalson had run away and married Matilda the day before.

So they all lived happily, Old Hick, Prince Charming and Mignonette, Sandalson and Matilda, and Mouse, whose wife had begun to get very fussy over his being away from home so much.



LITTLE BO-PEEP

*Little Bo-peep has lost her sheep
And can't tell where to find them.
Leave them alone and they'll come home
Bringing their tails behind them.*



LITTLE BO-PEEP was a dear friend of Mignonette, Hickory Dickory Dock's daughter. They were girls together and loved each other dearly, though the story I am about to tell you happened long before Mignonette went with Prince Charming to live in his palace where the windows sang of Dreams-Come-True. As soon as Story Gnome came twinkling in on a sunbeam he said, "This is the tale of a sweet shepherdess, can you guess, can you guess, can you guess?"

"Bo-peep," I said promptly. I think he was disappointed that I guessed right the first time. It really wasn't very tactful of me, was it? But that didn't spoil the pretty story that he told that sunny day.

When Little Bo-peep came into the Fairy World she was the first girl in a large family of fairy brothers. Her parents, of course, adored her. They named her Eustasia for a mortal who had once done Bo-peep's mother a great kindness. But that was such a responsible name for this brown-eyed fairy that it soon was changed. Bo-peep's mother used to hide her face behind her hands, then part them suddenly and say "Boo." The little girl would laugh and answer "Peep," just like a

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

merry, fluffy Easter Chicken. Soon the whole family played this game and one morning Smallest Brother cried, "Hello there, little Boo-peep." All the family liked this pet name and gradually "Boo-peep" became "Bo-peep," because that was easier to say and soon the fairy mother would tell strangers, "Yes, her name is Eustasia, but we call her Bo-peep for short."

Bo-peep, like Boy Blue, grew old enough to do her share of work in the Fairy Kingdom, and, like him, made friends with all the animals. So she was given the care of two Woolly Sheep, and each morning woke them from their dreams and each evening drove them with gentle pokes of her crook back to their beds.

By the time she was a big girl she felt very well acquainted with her Woolly Sheep and quite ready for the test that is given all the fairy people before they are taught the spells and magic words that make it possible for them to help mortals.

But I am sorry to say that being the only girl in a large family of brothers and having nothing but a pet name she was rather spoiled. Once in a while she pouted and on one dreadful occasion she forgot to paint her Woolly Sheep with the magic brush that keeps them white as snow in Fairyland. She loved to play and felt cross sometimes when her Woolly Sheep took so much of her time.

But she was so dear and so gentle with Woolly Sheep that they loved her and did not mind if she left a few little dark spots when she brushed and painted them. However, when Bo-peep's godmother came around one day she saw that the Woolly Sheep were beginning to look quite speckled.

"This will never do," she said to herself. And next day she came again. Woolly Sheep were still speckled and in their stubby tails were several knots that Bo-peep had failed to brush out.



THE FAIRY QUEEN STOOPED AND
PUT HER ARMS ABOUT LITTLE
BO-PEEP AND KISSED HER...

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

Godmother could not bear to have her god-daughter fail in the fairy tests. Besides, she had permission from the Fairy Queen to teach Bo-peep a very special magic word when the time came, and if spots were found on Woolly Sheep she would never be able to tell Bo-peep this Magic.

So next morning when Bo-peep went to take Woolly Sheep out to pasture she found them looking so ashamed. Their tails had been magicked away. Such sorry, unfinished-looking sheep they were. Bo-peep was terribly distressed—though I must tell you that first she had to go back to the house to get her face straight, for these tailless Woolly Sheep did look so funny.

“Have you any idea how this happened?” she asked them a few minutes later.

“Not one,” answered Older Woolly Sheep. “When we woke up this morning our tails, our lovely soft white tails, were gone.”

Bo-peep looked sober. She knew that their tails were not always so white and soft as they should be.

“Did it hurt?” she asked. And she shuddered. For she did love her Woolly Sheep and her kind little heart was quite torn at thinking that they might have to suffer.

“Oh, no,” said Younger Woolly Sheep. “I am only sorry that I cannot frisk so well in the wind today with my tail gone.” For many animals use their tails as rudders to help them keep their balance and this is especially true of Fairy Sheep.

When Bo-peep’s family saw Woolly Sheep they were very much alarmed. For the next day came the fairy tests and they had taken great pride in believing that Bo-peep might become a Maid-in-Waiting to the Fairy Queen. With her Woolly Sheep looking so queer there was danger that she

LITTLE BO-PEEP

might not even have her five-minute spell extended to the ten-minute spell that the grown fairies all know.

Woolly Sheep had not realized how serious the loss of their tails might be. And when they heard the family talking so, they were very sad, for they loved Bo-peep and wanted to see her go to court.

As they stood talking to each other about this dreadful occurrence they suddenly had an idea, both at the same time. They would go to find their tails.

And when the family looked out an hour later, Woolly Sheep had both vanished from the meadow.

Now there was consternation indeed. Woolly Sheep gone! What could they do? The fairy tests tomorrow and no fat, sleek Woolly Sheep for Bo-peep to show as proof of her accomplishments.

But Bo-peep felt worst of all.

"I don't care a bit about all the old fairy tests," she sobbed. "I just want my dear Woolly Sheep. They love me so and I love them so. Oh, I just can't bear to think they may be lost in Magicland." Magicland is the twilight country that lies between Fairyland and Earth.

So she cried and mourned for the lost sheep and got her pretty brown eyes all red and was not at all an attractive sight.

The family felt that to have Bo-peep looking any other than her dear self was a catastrophe too great to be borne and they sent in haste for Bo-peep's godmother.

When she came they told her all the sad story and she listened with a twinkle in her eye.

Then she said:

"Leave them alone and they'll come home
Bringing their tails behind them."

Bo-peep was comforted and when a little later Godmother

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

brought them back from their search for the lost tails Bo-peep could hardly contain herself.

For Godmother had taken their tails to her own green yard and there in the fairy sunlight had bleached them and brushed them until they shone like soft clouds.

She had met Woolly Sheep when they started on their loving search and took them to her own green yard and gave them their tails. Then she painted them with a specially magical brush and they really looked like new sheep when they got home.

But though the family all rejoiced, Bo-peep sat silent and she did not sleep a wink that night.

Next morning her mother and godmother dressed her in a dress as yellow as sunbeams and put on her feet the glass slippers that all fairies wear in the presence of the Fairy Queen.

With one Woolly Sheep on either side, Bo-peep curtsied low before her Queen. She was so dear and Woolly Sheep looked at her so lovingly that Fairy Queen spoke the words that made Bo-peep a Maid-in-Waiting.

But Bo-peep, instead of smiling and kissing the Fairy Queen's hand, hid her head and a tear ran down her cheek.

"What is it, my dear?" the Fairy Queen asked kindly. "Don't you want to be a Maid-in-Waiting?"

"I want to, oh, I do want to," cried Bo-peep. "But I don't deserve to be. Woolly Sheep look like soft white clouds because my dear godmother made them so. I let them get spotty and lose their tails because I liked to play too well. I am so sorry because I do so want to be a Maid-in-Waiting."

Then the Fairy Queen stooped and put her arms about dear little Bo-peep and kissed her.

"You shall be my very highest Maid-in-Waiting," she said.

LITTLE BO-PEEP

“I know that no harm can ever come near me with brave Bo-peep in my train.”

And all the Fairy court looked lovingly at Bo-peep with tears in their eyes.

And Bo-peep's mother and godmother and all the family were too proud and happy for words.



GOOSEY GOOSEY GANDER

*Goosey, Goosey, Gander
Whither dost thou wander?
Upstairs and downstairs
And in my lady's chamber.*



It is generally believed that no goose has any sense. So a story about a wise goose ought to be lots of fun, don't you think? Story Gnome sang the words of the old rhyme at me one night as he appeared suddenly in the firelight. Then while I thought them over, wondering about the story, he magicked the little red chair in from the play room and curled himself up in it.

"Yes," he said. "This is the story of a wise goose."

"A wise goose may be a possibility in Fairyland, but all the geese I have seen on Earth have been very stupid," I argued.

"Exactly!" quoth Story Gnome. "That is what makes this story as fascinating as the others I've been releasing from the magic books."

And so, once upon a time there was a Princess in Fairyland who was very unhappy. She was not a very important princess, for the really important ones are too busy to be unhappy. In fact, this particular Princess was quite lazy and spent a great many hours just polishing her pretty fingernails, though her maid did it each morning until they shone.



"WELL. PLUCKED PRINCESS
LORIBELL," HISSED THE
GANDER SOFTLY'.....

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

Princess Loribell was of course very pretty, being just sixteen. But into her face were stealing little lines of crossness and laziness and bad temper. There really seemed to be danger that she might be banished to Magicland, for the Fairies will not abide an ugly Princess.

Loribell's mother was very worried about her daughter. And one day while walking in the Barnyard looking at her ducklings and goslings and baby calves she found herself thinking aloud.

"What shall I do about Loribell? I spoiled her so when she was little that now she doesn't want to do anything for herself. If she looks any older or has any more lines in her face when the Queen visits me next month I am afraid Loribell may be sent to Magicland. What shall I do?"

There was a large green frog sitting on the edge of the duck-pond listening to Loribell's mother. His name was Wugg.

"See Willowitch. See Willowitch," he croaked.

Loribell's mother looked around astonished.

"Who is speaking?" she asked.

But with a final croak, "See Willowitch," Wugg plunged into the duck pond, and that is the end of him in this story.

But his words remained in Loribell's mother's mind. She thought of the idea a great deal the next day, for Loribell had a bad fit of temper and would not go out to dust the roses after breakfast, and her mother was sure she could see tiny lines creeping around Loribell's discontented eyes.

So right after lunch she posted off to see Willowitch.

"You have a lazy daughter," screamed Willowitch as Loribell's mother came near her house. Willowitch is really very kind hearted but she likes people to be afraid of her if possible and she is very ugly and has a horrible voice.

GOOSEY GOOSEY GANDER

Poor mother. She wanted to defend Loribell. But she could not. No one ever dares tell Willowitch a lie.

“Put her to work.” And Willowitch turned back to her Cauldron in which she was stewing up the five-minute spells that all fairy children are given when they are born.

“But how—what—” Loribell’s mother held out her hands to Willowitch. Wasn’t that just what she herself had wanted Loribell to do? Fairies are very busy people you know if they are to stay in Fairyland.

“Take away her maid,” Willowitch gave the Cauldron a vigorous stir.

“Take away her Silken Gown,” another stir.

“Put her in the Barnyard

“To make a Bed of Down.” Willowitch lifted the spells and dropped them back into the boiling pot. Then she added in a whisper, “The Queen will be here a week earlier than usual,” and vanished. This was her convenient way of ending a tiresome conversation.

Loribell’s mother thought deeply all the way home. She knew Willowitch was wise. But how could she carry out the advice, put Loribell to work. “Take away her maid,” and the rest of the rhyme kept running through her head.

When she went into the garden there sat Loribell just watching while a great Green Worm ate a hole in a lovely Tea Rose. Then Loribell’s mother was angry.

“Shame on you, lazy daughter,” she cried. “To let one of my lovely roses be eaten and the Queen coming to see my Garden next month too. How can you?” and with one sweep of her hand she magicked the Green Worm into Limbo, and magicked her daughter into her room.

When dinner time came Loribell rang for her maid. She wished to change her Rose Petal Dress for one of Buttercups.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

Her mother loved her so in the Buttercup Dress that Loribell felt sure of forgiveness for the afternoon's fault. But though she rang and rang no maid came.

Deciding that she would have to get another maid she went to her great Clothes Press to take down the Buttercup Dress herself. When she opened it, it was empty save for one lean, lank Gown of Dull Purple, a most unbecoming color.

Then the ugly Purple Dress did a surprising thing. Its sleeves reached out and caught hold of Loribell. In a moment she was clothed in the hideous thing, her Rose Petal Dress seeming to vanish in the air.

Poor Loribell. And a suitor at dinner too. And two of her cousins.

She heard her mother's voice. "Run right in, Loribell will love to see you a minute before dinner."

Loribell wished to die of shame, but into the room ran the cousins and stopped short in surprise at the sight of the fastidious Loribell wearing the ugliest dress they had ever seen. However, they were too polite to say anything and Loribell, holding her head high, went down with them to dinner.

At dinner the talk turned on the coming of the Fairy Queen to this province.

"Loribell is going to pluck Geese to make a Bed of Down for the Queen to sleep on when she is here," quoth Loribell's mother.

The guests gave a start of surprise, for they knew not only how lazy Loribell had always been, but also what a terrific task plucking a Down Bed would be.

Loribell was too proud to contradict her mother.

"I am quite set on doing it," she said, holding her head a little higher.

GOOSEY GOOSEY GANDER

I rather enjoy thinking of the surprise Loribell's mother must have felt. And probably she felt even then a little proud that her daughter could behave in such a royal manner.

But it was a sulky Fairy Princess that went out to the Barnyard in the morning.

With her mother at her elbow she spoke the invitation to the Geese. It was a great honor to be plucked to make a bed for the Fairy Queen and all the Geese crowded about offering their soft bosoms to Loribell's fingers.

All save one. He was a young Gander, thin and scrawny and ugly. He stood at the edge of the flock looking wistfully at the fine Fluffy Geese who stood close to their Princess. But though the young Gander was thin and scrawny, he had an understanding heart. All the Geese were proud and happy and they believed that the Princess was proud and happy too. Only Goosey Goosey Gander saw the Black Cloud in her Heart and knew that she was angry and disgusted.

All that day he watched while Loribell put the Tiny Feathers in Silken Bags that later were to be emptied into the Royal Mattress. When Twilight fell and Loribell rose wearily to her feet he passed close to her.

"Well plucked, Princess Loribell," he hissed softly.

Loribell looked down at him and smiled in spite of her weariness. He was such a scrawny bird. But that smile drove from her face some weary lines and though her mother looked sternly at her as she entered the palace, the harsh glance seemed to hurt very little.

Each day the scrawny Goose watched Loribell and each night he spoke some word of encouragement. Loribell needed it. All day long she sat plucking Feathers from the breasts of wiggling, good-natured Geese. Sometimes she wished

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

they would resist, would do anything but grin their silly grin at her. But always she plucked on and on.

One morning Goosey Gander sidled up to Loribell.

"Gray Goose has seven little goslings this morning," he whispered.

Loribell paid little attention to him until later when Gray Goose waddled proudly up to be plucked. Then she heard herself speaking.

"I heard you have seven children this morning," she said.

Gray Goose nearly burst for joy. She filled Loribell's ears with the tale of her wonderful flock and later in the day led the downy balls up for the Princess to fondle. Now each morning Goosey Gander told Loribell something about the flock and each night spoke his soft "well done."

Daily Loribell looked happier, more interested in life. The little tired unhappy lines disappeared and even in the Purple Gown Loribell was lovely.

Then with no word of warning the Fairy Queen arrived.

Loribell was plucking Geese when the great Drawbridge in front of the Palace clanged down and the Heralds sounded their Trumpets.

Loribell's mother led the Fairy Queen to the Barnyard, where the Queen took the girl in her arms and kissed her.

"It is a task of love and fealty indeed that you do," said the Queen. "You have been very brave to stay at this hard task."

"I have not been brave," said Loribell. "I hated this task and only kept at it because Goosey Gander here showed me how interesting these Geese are in spite of their silly looks and because each night he cheered me when no one else spoke a kind word to me."

"You are brave to tell me this," said the Queen, who had

GOOSEY GOOSEY GANDER

heard the whole story from Willowitch. "I will give you no reward, for you have it in your lovely face and sparkling eyes which you were in danger of losing. But to Goosey Gander who helped you to be faithful I give the freedom of this house and of my castle forever. He may wander upstairs and downstairs and in my lady's chamber at his pleasure."

Goosey Gander looked down at his red, rawboned breast. No fit person he for wandering in palaces. And lo, he was covered with softest, whitest down, glistening and gleaming in the Magic Light that fell about the Fairy Queen's person.



MARY, MARY, QUITE CONTRARY

*“Mary, Mary, quite contrary
How does your garden grow?”
“With silver bells and cockle shells
And pretty maids all in a row.”*



HERE are two quotations in that rhyme. Can you find the quotation marks? They are not in your Mother Goose books, but Story Gnome says that is because Mother Goose had no time to explain the story when she sang the rhyme to the children who lived in the shoe in the far-away time. She just sang it and they sang it to their children when they grew up, and this is the very first time that Mary Quite Contrary's story has ever come out of the magic books. Then, too, in this story you will meet the Flighty Godmother, that careless person who is probably responsible for your forgetting to say "thank you" sometimes. It makes her very happy for you to remember without her putting the words into your mouth every time. And now for the story.

Mary was a darling girl, but I am sorry to tell you that she did not have a very happy home. You see when she was a tiny baby she had a really dreadful accident happen to her. Her Flighty Godmother mislaid her and Evileye carried her off to his own gloomy cottage in Magicland.

It happened this way. Mary's parents were dreadfully busy parents and the morning she was to be christened they



THE JOKE'S ON ME
SAID EVILEYE AND
HE SMILED A WAN
GHOST OF A SMILE

JOE
KING

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both had to be on Earth until just time for the christening. So they asked the Flighty Godmother to bring Mary to the Palace where all the fairy babies are christened. Flighty Godmother, who was always trying to do three things at once, flew to Mary's house and put Mary in her pocket. Fairy babies are very tiny and very good. Then when Flighty Godmother was dressing for the ceremony she emptied her pocket and laid Mary down on a Cobweb Handkerchief. You know how easy it is to forget your handkerchief, and Flighty Godmother flew off to the Palace leaving Mary and the Cobweb Handkerchief lying on a chair by her dressing table.

Evileye was passing along chasing Smiles when Flighty Godmother left the house, so he popped in to see if she had left any Smiles lying around. Then he saw Mary. Here was a happy thing he could get and keep for his very own.

So he laid her gently in a Milk Weed Pod Cradle, gave the cradle a little puff and floated it over into Magicland.

Now Evileye is really not a bad fellow. He is grumpy and hates laughter and fun. Magicland is all twilight and Baby Mary grew up to be quite a pale little girl in spite of the attentions of the Flighty Fairy Godmother who felt most dreadfully bad when Mary was lost. I must explain that the fairies have very little power in Magicland if the person they wish to influence has been there more than an hour. Mary had been there nearly a day before the frantic Godmother discovered her. Fairy parents, when they are as busy helping Earth folk as Mary's father and mother were, leave the bringing up of their children largely to the Godmothers. So although they came to see Mary from time to time, it was the Flighty Godmother who was most concerned about Mary's welfare.

Evileye sent Mary to school and gave her three excellent

MARY, MARY, QUITE CONTRARY

meals every day of Oxblood Soup and Sweetpea Sandwiches. But he never permitted her to smile. And if she had ever told him a joke he would have punished her most severely I am sure.

But Flighty Godmother went often to see little Mary and while Evileye was busy chasing Smiles away from those who wanted to use them she showed Mary how to wear a Smile on her Rosebud Mouth and warned her never to let Evileye know she could do it.

Mary grew so pretty that Flighty Godmother decided she simply must come to Fairyland to live. So she put her pride in her pocket and went to talk to Willowitch.

Willowitch is very ugly, but she is quite obliging and makes only harmless spells.

“How can I get my little God-daughter out of Magicland, Willowitch?” asked the Flighty Fairy Godmother looking very pretty and giving Willowitch a little yellow bag lined with opal. In the bag were two spots from a butterfly’s wings that Flighty Godmother had brought to help Willowitch with her spells.

“If she can make Evileye smile he will have no more power over her,” said Willowitch, examining the contents of the yellow bag. She was quite pleased so she added, “He hates pretty things, life, color, sweet sounds, you know. And he is very obstinate. Only a girl more obstinate than he will ever get away from his power.”

Flighty Godmother left thinking very deeply.

Several days later she called on Mary and took with her several little packages of seeds.

“You are looking pale, my dear,” she said to Mary. “Exercise in the open air will do you good. You must make a Garden.”

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"I'd love to," said Mary. "But will Evileye let me?"

"Well, we'll see," said Godmother. "Let's start now before he comes home."

So they went out behind the house and began to dig. Just then Evileye came in. He had just put in a very hard day. People on Earth and in Fairyland were very cheerful and he had hardly been able to catch a Smile all day long.

"What's this?" he asked suspiciously looking at the newly turned earth.

"It's going to be a Garden," said Godmother, being very careful not to smile, for she did not wish to irritate Evileye.

"Why do you want to have a Garden here?" asked Evileye crossly.

"Mary needs the exercise," said Godmother. "She is looking pale."

"I like her pale," said Evileye grumpily. "I don't want her to have a Garden."

Now I must explain that while Mary longed to go to Fairyland she was really fond of Evileye who had always been kind to her. Evileye in his way loved her and couldn't help his cross nature which hated Smiles. They got along quite well and Mary had always been obedient until now. Godmother had told her so much about the joys of a Garden that she truly longed for one.

The next morning she found that Evileye had smoothed over the spot where the seeds had been the night before. While he was out joy-killing, Mary carefully picked up the little seeds and gave them a new bed.

Meantime Godmother had been training a Smile. It was a dear little Smile and she taught it to float in the air quite close to a person and then give a little skip and just barely keep itself from getting smiled. When Evileye started out

MARY, MARY, QUITE CONTRARY

that day Godmother sent this Smile to tease him and he chased it all day, never getting quite close enough to clap it in his little black bag.

When he got home that night and saw that Mary had put the seeds in new beds he was very cross, as tired people always are.

“Contrary child,” he scolded. “Why do you want a Garden? That Godmother of yours is always setting you cross-wise. First thing I know she’ll teach you to smile.” And he went out and turned the earth in Mary’s Garden all topsy turvy.

Next morning when Evileye started out he saw that same elusive little Smile on his front porch. He started after it and though he chased the livelong day he never so much as touched it. It was the most exasperating smile he had ever chased.

While he was gone Mary took three seeds, each different from the other and put them in beds alone. She patted the earth down nicely and tried to make it look as though there were no seeds in the ground at all.

When Evileye came home that night he felt terribly cross and sarcastic.

“Well, Contrary Mary, how’s your beautiful Garden?” he asked.

“Doing nicely thank you, Evileye,” said Mary, for she was a truthful child.

Evileye looked all around and not seeing any new beds felt satisfied. He thought Mary was teasing and that suited him, for it seemed at last that perhaps she would act like his daughter and lose even a suspicion of cheerfulness.

All that spring Evileye chased the charmed Smile. Godmother taught it to keep him out until quite late at night so that he could not see how Mary’s plants were thriving.

The Elusive Smile made him very cross but each night he

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cheered himself by saying, "Well, Contrary Mary, how's your beautiful Garden?"

And Mary would answer, "Doing nicely, thank you, Evileye."

Evileye thought she was trying to annoy him and felt more and more pleased with her.

At last one afternoon Evileye caught the Elusive Smile. He popped it into his little black bag and started home. He had earned a rest and an early tea. Such a Charming Smile had no right to be loose upon the Earth and now there was no chance of its ever getting itself smiled.

Evileye hurried home and turned in at his gate. Mary sat on the front porch thinking with satisfaction of the three plants that grew in her three-cornered back yard.

"Well, Mary, Mary, quite contrary,

How does your Garden grow?" said Evileye.

"With silver bells and cockle shells and pretty maids all in a row," answered Mary. "Come, let me show you," and she led the way to the three-cornered back yard.

"What?" gasped Evileye. "What's this? How does it happen that you have this Garden, and such a queer one at that?"

"You asked me about it every evening," said Mary demurely.

"So I did, so I did," said Evileye, shaking his head. "And what a queer Garden."

The pretty maid smiled, the silver bells tinkled and the cockle shells twinkled in the sunshine.

"And I thought she was fooling," said Evileye. "The joke's on me," and in spite of himself he smiled a wan ghost of a smile.

That moment the Fairy Godmother laid her hand on Mary's shoulder.

MARY, MARY, QUITE CONTRARY

“You have lost your power over her,” she cried. “Now Mary can come with me to Fairyland.”

Mary jumped for joy. Then she looked at Evileye’s down-cast face. He was actually crying.

“Dear Evileye,” cried Mary. “I am sorry to leave you. I almost wish I hadn’t been so obstinate about that Garden and made it grow all Summer.”

Something happened to Evileye’s heart just then.

“Go, my dear, it is where you belong,” he said. “And before you go let me give you a gift.”

From his bag he took the Elusive and Lovely Little Smile he had chased all summer and presented it to Mary.

Godmother waved her wand and, wearing the Loveliest Smile in all the World and a dress of Rainbow Mist, Mary floated off to Fairyland.



GEORGY PORGY

*Georgy Porgy
Pudding-y pie.
Kissed the girls and made them cry.
When the boys came out to play
Georgy Porgy ran away.*



YOU probably think of Georgy Porgy as a fat, greedy little boy with unpleasant manners, and so did I until the Story Gnome told me about him. His story made me both glad and sorry, glad that Georgy Porgy's wish came true, and sorry that all of us so often misunderstand about the outsides of people, like Willowitch, who is good at heart, but ugly and gruff to meet. First of all, before we get to the real story I must ask you to notice that word "pudding-y." In most of your Mother Goose books you will find the rhyme reading, "pudding and pie." But if you were to look in an old, old book such as they printed in England by hand many years ago, you would find it written as I have written it above. So it is written in the great tomes that Story Gnome reads in the silent library of the Fairy Queen.

And this is the story.

There was once a fairy family named Porgy. And they were particularly interested in appetites. When the good Earth Children over whom they watched got sick, the Porgy family took their ailing appetites off to Fairyland and kept them there until the Earth children were well again and ready to



"OFF TO THE KING YOU GO," HE ROARED, CATCHING HIS SON BY THE BACK OF THE NECK AND RUSHING HIM TO THE PALACE..

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eat. Quite often, for Mother and Father Porgy took excellent care of those pale little appetites, they were bigger and stronger than ever, so that the sick boys and girls on Earth could get well and strong quickly.

For a long time Father and Mother Porgy had no children. They longed for a child, for both Father and Mother Porgy were famous cooks and had invented honey-pie, and pop-corn cake, and could prepare dishes that looked and tasted just like those you can see in pictures in Mother's nicest cook book or in the magazines.

But at last a little baby boy fairy came to live with them and you can imagine how happy they were and how much time Mother Porgy spent thinking of delicious things to cook for Georgy, for that was their baby's name, as you know from the rhyme. Father Porgy was a jolly fat fellow who loved to laugh and joke. He often amused the Fairy King with his jests and quips and he wanted his son Georgy to grow up to be the same fat, jolly kind of fairy.

But somehow Georgy wasn't that kind of fairy child at all. He liked to be by himself much of the time, and he was forever drawing pictures. He especially loved to draw pictures of the girl fairies he played with, showing them as they danced lightly and gracefully in the meadows, or cared for their woolly lambs, or ran to meet their dear Godmothers.

Father and Mother Porgy paid little attention to Georgy's pictures and Father Porgy often scolded his son for not playing ball with the boy fairies or going off to catch goldfish with them. "They'll think you're a little sissy if you stay around the house all the time, or just play with the girls," he roared one day, and then went off to the court, shaking his head sadly at this gentle son he had in place of the rollicking boy he had hoped for.

GEORGY PORGY

Mother Porgy felt much like Father Porgy did, and she decided to go to consult Willowitch about Georgy. You see when people are so tremendously interested in appetites as Father and Mother Porgy were, it is hard to have time to appreciate pictures like those that Georgy could draw. So off went Mother Porgy to Willowitch.

First she made an Epicurean dish of honey-pie with whipped cream over the top and placed it on a golden platter. Then she took it in her hand and went and knocked on the door of Willowitch's hut.

The door flew open. The honey-pie flew into the doorway. The door flew shut and Willowitch spoke with her mouth full of pie.

“Give him a pudding-y pie.”

Now Georgy was just half past ten and Mother Porgy thought he was old enough to have some pie now and then, but she hadn't made him many pies and she wondered if this were some special kind she had forgotten.

All the way home she wondered about it and kept repeating to herself, “A pudding-y pie. What in Fairyland can that be?”

When she got home she took down all the fairy cook books she had and searched and searched, but nothing could she find. Father Porgy coming home for dinner found her thinking deeply, the dinner all neglected. However, he wasn't cross, being a very fine cook himself and quite used to getting the meals when Mother Porgy was busy with the appetites of sick Earth children. He just went ahead and got a lovely dinner ready while Mother Porgy told him about her visit to Willowitch.

When she had finished he gave a great hearty laugh. “Why that's easy,” he said. “Just make a pudding and put

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

it in a pie crust. What good it will do the child I don't know, but if Willowitch said to try it, go ahead and see what happens."

Mother Porgy was still doubtful, it seemed such a silly thing to do. But she began to think of all the puddings she could make and finally said:

"Georgy's favorite pudding is baked custard. Now if I put a custard pudding mixture in a pie-crust and baked them both at the same time, I suppose I'd have a pudding-y pie. I can try it anyway."

So the next day she made a lovely custard with eggs from the Little Red Hen and creamy milk from Boy Blue's Friendly Cow. She poured it into a pie-crust and into the oven it went. When it came out it looked so good and smelled so good that Mother Porgy almost tasted it herself. But she remembered that it was a magic pie and thought she had better not.

Georgy came in from his morning's play. He was a pale, tall boy with blue eyes, keen and bright, and soft, fair hair. He went directly to the table and, taking a pencil and paper, began to draw. Under his fingers grew a lovely girl fairy, winsome and sweet and full of grace.

"Isn't Ladylocks beautiful, Mother?" he asked, showing her the picture when he had finished.

"Yes, Georgy, but I wish you wouldn't play so much with the girls. You know how cross it makes your father," she said. "See what a delicious pie I have baked for you this morning."

"Thank you, Mother," said Georgy, beginning to eat it, for fairy meals are quite different from ours, you know, and often begin and end with dessert.

As soon as he had eaten a large slice of pie Georgy ran out to show Ladylocks the drawing. She told him she thought it

GEORGY PORGY

beautiful and he was so glad for some kind words about it that he kissed her cheek.

But he had forgotten to wash his face after eating the pie and he left a sticky mark on Ladylocks' face that made her stamp her foot and tell him she thought he was hateful. She ran into the house to wash her face and Georgy, who was pretty much of a boy after all, began kissing the girls right and left and making all their faces sticky. They cried and ran in the house, leaving Georgy alone. Presently the boy fairies began gathering for their afternoon game of ball, and Georgy, who didn't like ball, went into the house.

It just happened that Father Porgy had been watching and he thought Georgy was running away from the boys, though he had chuckled when he saw Georgy teasing the girls with his sticky kisses. He decided to take things into his own hands.

"Off to the King you go," he roared, catching his son by the back of his neck and rushing him through the air to the palace.

The Fairy King, who loved all children, sent Georgy's father from the throne room and talked very gently to Georgy.

"It isn't that I dislike the boys especially," said Georgy through his tears. "But the girls are so much prettier to draw. See." And he held out to the Fairy King the sketch of Ladylocks which he still held in one hand.

The Fairy King looked at it. "Why this is beautiful!" he cried. Then he called the Fairy Queen, who is quite the most beautiful person in all the world. Georgy Porgy opened his eyes wide and drank in her loveliness. The Fairy King guessed what was in his mind.

"Would you like to make me a picture of the Fairy Queen?" he asked.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

“Oh, if I only could——” gasped Georgy Porgy.

“If you will play with the boys every afternoon to please your father, you may come here to the palace to paint pictures for us every morning,” said the Fairy King.

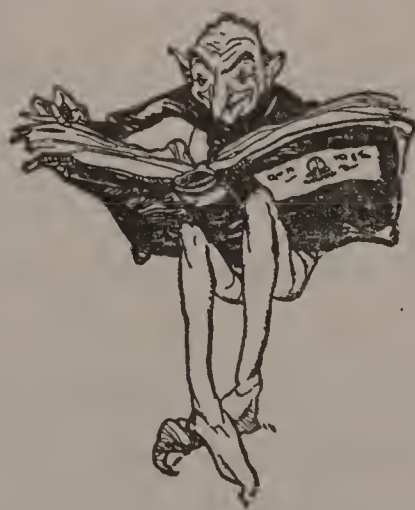
Georgy Porgy promised gladly, and though he never got very fat, he did grow stronger and in time his father grew extremely proud of his son. For when he was a big fairy he made all the beautiful portraits of Mignonette, Hickory Dickory Dock’s daughter, of Loribell and Goosey Gander, of Mary Mary Quite Contrary, and of the Fairy Queen herself. These and many more hang on the walls of the Fairy Queen’s library where Story Gnome can see them and tell us about them.

As for the pudding-y pie. You have guessed of course that it was the first custard pie. Father and Mother Porgy tasted it themselves and Mother Porgy whispered the recipe to an Earth mother who told it to many other mothers, this way:

Custard in cups from one to ten.

Custard in pie crust, for little men.

——and girls too.



TOM, THE PIPER'S SON

*Tom, he was a piper's son
He learned to play when he was young
But all the tune that he could play
Was, "Over the hills and far away."*

*Over the hills and a great way off
The wind shall blow my top-knot off.*



"AM not a musical soul," announced the Story Gnome as he flitted into my room one sunny morning when I was wishing for a story to write for you. "Indeed I am not. Nor, as you can see by my figure, which is a very good one for a gnome, am I a graceful dancer. But many's the measure I've tripped to the playing of Tom, the Piper's Son. No one ever played like he could play—nor wrote such sweet songs as his, that I have been reading this night long in the library of the Fairy Queen."

This sounded very much like the answer to my wish for a story to write for you, so I made Story Gnome welcome and put on my most attentive look. Besides, I have grown very fond of the little fellow, as I hope you have by this time.

Tom was the only child of musical parents, Story Gnome told me when he had crossed his legs and made himself comfortable in a little red chair from the play-room in my house. Both Tom's father and mother could play sweetly on the lute and often appeared in festivals for the Fairy Queen and her court. Their one wish for their son was that he be musical.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

So when he came to live with them, a wee fairy baby with a puckish face, they sang to him by the hour, played tunes on the lute, and invited Tommy Tucker to come to sing him all the songs of Fairyland.

By the time Tom was four years old he could play cunningly on a tiny pipe his Godmother had given him and coax even the oldest, stiffest fairy to dance to his piping. As he grew older his appearance in the fields and meadows of Fairyland was a signal for all the fairy children in the neighborhood to come out to dance.

It was to his piping that Ladylocks danced the day Georgy Porgy drew her picture and took it to the Fairy King.

Evileye often passed the merry group that danced so featly about Tom and his pipe and looked enviously at the bright smiles on the faces of the fairy children, smiles he could not chase away and pop into his little black bag, though he tried with all his might and main.

"If just once I could chase away the smiles in that crowd and put them all in here," he whispered to himself, shaking his little black bag, "I could go home to an early tea and rest for a week." And although he knew the power of Tom's music, he often lingered near the dancers in the hope of catching a stray smile or two.

At last he began to plot a way to spoil the fun.

One day he came to the door of Tom's house and knocked, very early in the morning.

Tom's mother came to the door and recognized Evileye in great surprise. "What do you want?" she asked.

"Do you suppose," said Evileye humbly, "do you suppose that Tom would come out and play for me? I have such a headache." And he looked most lugubrious — a lovely word for you to remember.



TUNE AFTER TUNE, JUBILANT NOTE. AND LILTING AIR
POURED FORTH INTO THE MORNING SUNSHINE...

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

Tom's mother was so proud of her son that she smiled at Evileye, who winced at this attention, and turned to call Tom.

Tom came gaily out with his pipe and, leaning lazily against the trunk of a slender tree, began to play all the tunes he had learned from the time he was a baby up until the day before yesterday. For he was resolved to make this grumpy little fellow happy if music had power to do it.

Tune after tune, jubilant note and lilting air poured forth into the morning sunshine, and all the fairy children danced about their tasks, for it was yet too early for them to appear on the green.

Tom was so absorbed by his playing that he did not notice that after every tune Evileye opened a bag of purple silk that he carried this morning in place of his usual black one, and popped into it the very tune that Tom had just finished.

At last Tom reached the end of his repertoire—another nice word for you to ask Mother about. He grinned at Evileye and said:

“And that's all for this morning, Evileye — but wait. Here is a tune 'specially for you because you have not smiled once during my playing. It is called 'Over the Hills and Far Away.' ”

Then Tom played a merry little tune with a sort of sob in behind it, a tune that made all the fairy children want to leave their tasks and go to far-off lands.

“I'll let you keep that one,” said Evileye when Tom had finished. “It will keep all the mothers from smiling for a long time. Here are the others,” and before Tom could wink Evileye clasped the purple bag on top of the boy's head and wished it fast there with a charm from Magicland.

“Now play!” said His Grumpiness, Evileye.

TOM, THE PIPER'S SON

Tom put his lips to his pipe, but no merry tune danced into his head and out of the pipe. Time and again he tried, but each time there was no answering melody, until at last, with a mighty effort, there came again the notes of "Over the Hills and Far Away."

At this sound Evileye vanished from sight and went home well satisfied with his morning's work. Out came the children, ready to dance. But no dance music could Tom play, nor could he answer their questions about that queer purple bag tied on his head. When one of them tried to snatch it off Tom cried out, "You are hurting me," and at last the children trooped sadly into their homes to tell their fathers and mothers of the strange happening.

About this time Tom's father and mother, who had been busy in Earthland carrying new tunes to musicians there, came home. Tom told them all the morning's occurrences and, at the end of his story, played them the mournful little tune that was now all the tune that he could play.

They wept to hear it, and when Tom would have stepped sadly out of the house to its rhythm, they stopped him, for they feared that he would indeed go far away over the green hills to Magicland, there to ask Evileye to restore the lovely melodies he had stolen.

Day after day Tom sat in his fairy cottage playing his one remaining tune. Day after day the fairy children mourned his absence. And day after day Tom's father and mother tried to think of some way to help their son.

They sang to him, but not one song could he remember long enough to play it on his pipe. And whenever his desire to leave the house and wander afar grew too strong, they put his pipe sadly away and turned his mind to other things.

At last Tom's father said, "I will go to Willowitch. She

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

is ugly, but she is wise. She is old, but she is kind at heart, though gruff in manner. Perhaps she will help us."

So he wrapped up some sweet little tunes that Willowitch could use in making lovely magic words for the grown-up fairies and went away to her cottage under the hill. There he sang a little song to her:

"Willowitch, oh Willowitch,
Help me now I pray.
Give me back the lovely songs
My son was wont to play."

Then he wished the sweet little tunes all wrapped in silver paper into the heart of Willowitch and presently he heard her say in a high sing-song:

"Follow the song,
Follow the song,
The one that he's playing
All the day long."

There was silence, and though Tom's father waited a long time he heard nothing further from this ugly old lady whom many persons suspected of being the kindest old woman in Fairyland.

At last he went home and told his wife and she saw the meaning of Willowitch's words instantly. But she was fearful of this advice and let her husband puzzle his brain for a week and a day before she told him what she thought.

He listened and shook his head, for he agreed with his wife that, if they followed Willowitch's advice, they might never see their son again. But at last one day when Tom sat

TOM, THE PIPER'S SON

silently at home, looking wistfully from his pipe which lay on a shelf to the green of the meadow outside, they opened the door and gave him his pipe.

He put it to his lips and began to play, softly, slowly, "Over the Hills and Far Away." Slowly he rose to his feet and just as slowly he went out of the doorway into the sunshine.

The fairy mothers heard his playing and clasped their children to their hearts lest they follow Tom. I think this must have been the same music the Pied Piper played many hundreds of years later to the children of Hamelin town.

Over the roads of Fairyland went Tom. And as he went his playing grew louder, his step grew lighter, and his feet moved faster over the meadows. He reached the hills and the lambs danced to his music. They frisked in the warm wind and Tom felt his heart grow light within him, though he had forgotten his home.

Higher and higher rose the wind. Faster and faster Tom played. Now he leaped and bounded into the air, skipped from stone to stone, threw his pipe up and caught it again, pouring out the notes of his one song, "Over the Hills and Far Away."

Suddenly, with a swirl and a puff the wind snatched at Tom, turned him about, blew his coat tails this way and that, then with a little pounce blew the purple top-knot from his head and scattered all the little tunes about the hills.

Tom gave a cry of joy and began to gather them back into his pipe, into his heart. First he took the little young ones that he had known when he was a very small child. Then he played the middle-sized ones, and lastly the longest and hardest ones. And with every old tune that sprang from his lips he danced closer to his home.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

The wind carried his music before him and when he came again to his home meadows there stood all the children, his father and mother, his friends and neighbors, waiting for him with gladness on their faces.

How they danced! How they made merry! How happy they all were to have Tom and his pipe and all his old songs back again!

As for Evileye, he was busy then chasing the smile that Contrary Mary's Flighty Godmother had trained to torment him and he never bothered Tom any more. And if you dislike Evileye too much you must remember that without him there would be no story. And that is a deep saying.



THE THREE SHIPS

*I saw three ships come sailing by, sailing by, sailing by.
I saw three ships come sailing by, on New Year's Day in the
morning.*

*Three pretty girls were in them then, in them then, in them
then,
Three pretty girls were in them then, on New Year's Day in
the morning.*

*One could whistle and one could sing, the other could play
the violin,
Such joy was there at my wedding, on New Year's Day in the
morning.*



THE Story Gnome came into my study late one evening, singing these words to an old tune that you may find in a book of old nursery rhymes and learn to sing for yourself. I knew there was a story in the air and got my pencil and paper ready. The Story Gnome made a magic wish that the story might be fresh and bright for you and then he began.

In Magicland, the country that lies between Earth and Fairyland, there once lived a King and Queen. They ruled over this difficult country wisely and well. It is a strange country where everything is half way. It is always twilight and things are half good, half evil. Evileye lives there. Willowitch's father came from there when Time was young and

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

married a fairy, thus giving Willowitch her ugly face and wise heart. The King of Magicland must take great care lest his subjects become either too good or too bad. The people of Fairyland are rather distrustful of Magicland. Fairies who tarry there longer than an hour come under the spell of the King of Magicland and it is often very hard to get them released.

It came to pass many thousands of years ago that a son was born to the King and Queen of Magicland. As he would one day help his father rule and perhaps in some far-off time become the King of Magicland, he was named Rex. His father was very eager that he be neither too good nor too bad, and so you can see how, when he grew up, he was very much like an Earthland child, yourself for instance.

He was tall and strong and good to look at, and very adventurous. One day he said to his father, "Oh King, which is also my father, I would visit Fairyland."

The King looked at him musingly. "Yes," he answered, "it is time that you grew acquainted with that country over which we have some power at odd times. Let me prepare an escort for you, that you may present yourself at the court of the Fairy Queen as befits the son of a King."

"I will not go that way," said the boy. "I will go alone, wearing my oldest clothes that I may search out the heart of this country."

The King of Magicland pondered this wish and finally consented. His wife, the Queen, was less willing, but when Rex had promised to bring her the secret of some bright new colors she had seen the fairies wearing on their way to errands in Earthland, she gave her consent and Rex made ready to leave.

"I make but one condition," said the King of Magicland.



"I AM REX, A KEEPER OF THE SHEEP," HE SAID HUMBLLY.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

“Whenever you are in danger, in trouble, in need, or in want of any kind, three ships in the form of swans will appear by your side that your adversaries will know that you are a youth of power and promise.”

And so Rex set off for Fairyland, attended by the three swanlike ships which vanished from his side when he had set foot among the green hills of Fairyland.

For several days he wandered about, seeing no one. On the third day he came in sight of a lovely castle and drew near the courtyard. There he saw a fair young girl talking with a flock of geese. When she went into the castle there followed her a large and royal-looking gander, white as snow, with a breast that gleamed in the sunlight.

Rex wondered at the strange sight and waited a day for another glimpse of the girl, who was the fairest he had ever seen. Again he saw her talking with the geese, speaking to the lambs, touching kindly the birds and beasts of the farmyard about the castle. His last sight of her that day was as she tended her mother's rose garden, bending her beautiful face over the roses and talking gaily to the great gander who stepped so regally after her.

“Now this is a strange thing,” said Rex to himself. “I must learn more of it.”

So he knocked at the great portal of the palace. An old, old woman answered the knock. At her side stepped the snow-white gander. They looked at Rex in silence.

“Have you work for a willing lad about the farmyard?” asked Rex.

“That we have,” answered the housekeeper. “You are tall and well built. You may tend and keep the flocks until the day after tomorrow, and then if you please us well, I will ask the Princess Loribell if you may remain.”

THE THREE SHIPS

At that moment the White Gander craned his graceful neck forward. Close to Rex appeared the three swanlike ships. They were invisible to the housekeeper and she was too old to wonder why he said sharply over his shoulder, "Begone, I am in no danger!"

"In danger only of losing your heart," whispered the gander to himself. He went through the palace to the golden hallway where he slept, while Rex made his way to the kitchen.

And that night as Loribell—for it was to her castle Rex had wandered—said good night to Goosey Gander he whispered softly to her, "I saw three ships come sailing by, sailing by, sailing by."

And though Loribell asked him what he meant, he said no further word but went to sleep on the golden roost outside her door.

In the morning Loribell and Goosey Gander came into the farmyard to greet the birds and animals as was their custom. There, scattering the magic grain that fed the fairy beasts, was a handsome young fellow who made the princess a courtly bow.

Now Loribell's mother was absent from this month until New Year's day on business for the Fairy Queen and Loribell was mistress of the house, so there was none to chide her for chatting overlong with the handsome feeder of the flocks. Nor did Goosey Gander seem to see any danger in these bright smiles the two exchanged.

Loribell found herself thinking constantly of her new shepherd in the days that followed. His courtly response to her sweet smile and pleasant good morning was puzzling, but Loribell was long accustomed to finding beauty in ordinary things. And more puzzling than the shepherd boy's manner was the strange habit Goosey Gander had developed of saying

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

softly to himself, "I saw three ships come sailing by, sailing by, sailing by." Nor would he tell her what he meant.

But though she was puzzled, and Goosey Gander was mysterious, and Rex was busy and happy, the King of Magicland was very uneasy. The three swanlike ships had been absent for three whole days and he feared his son was in some grave danger.

The fourth night the ships sailed to his window with a dream. And the dream that they brought him was this: His son Rex would take up his abode in Fairyland and never again visit his home for more than fifty-nine minutes at a time. The King awoke with a start. There, resting at his window were the three ships.

"Bring my son to me instantly," he commanded.

In a moment they whisked away to Fairyland and brought Rex back. Rex awoke from a dream of Loribell to the sound of his father's voice.

"What danger are you in, my son?" asked the King.

"I have lost my heart, Sire," said Rex. "And I trust you will not detain me. If I tarry overlong I may not recover it."

"Is she pretty?" asked the Queen, who woke very easily and was quite excited.

"She is lovely beyond words," said Rex. "And her heart is of pure gold."

"I can believe that she is beautiful," said the King. "I have always had a taste for beauty myself." Here he bowed to his wife who blushed and smiled. "But before I give my consent to your marriage with a Fairy Princess, I must be sure she is good and kind at heart. Remember that you are the Prince of Magicland, a fit match for the daughter of the Fairy Queen herself."

"Loribell will never marry me for my high position," said

THE THREE SHIPS

Rex proudly. "She will marry me for love of my own poor self."

"Prove that to us," said the King, "and we will give our blessing to your wedding."

So Rex sailed back to Fairyland and his daily talks with Loribell.

And now Loribell's nights were troubled. She knew how unhappy her mother would be if she married beneath the rank of Prince. And yet she knew that her heart had gone into the keeping of the shepherd boy. The morning of her mother's return, on New Year's Day, she promised softly to be his bride, though in truth she thought Rex a queer name for a herder of flocks.

As soon as the greetings were spoken she knelt before her mother, "Oh Princess, also my mother," she said, "I have given my heart into the keeping of Rex, the shepherd boy. I would marry him at once."

The Princess looked long at her daughter and then at her faithful guardian, Goosey Gander. The Great Gander slowly nodded his head and looked toward the window. Without rested three swanlike ships. The Princess spoke again to her daughter.

"Is he wise and kind and good, my child?" she asked.

"Wise and kind and good—and handsome," quoth Loribell.

The Princess laid her hand on Loribell's head. "Send then for him," she commanded.

Into the hall stepped Rex and knelt before his heart's desire. He turned his face nobly toward the Princess-mother.

"I am Rex, a keeper of the sheep," he said humbly and yet with a pride that did not escape the mother. "My rank is lowly, but your daughter has consented to share it."

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“His heart is of gold, Mother,” said Loribell, looking eagerly at her lover.

The Princess looked at Rex. Behind him rested the three ships. About him shone a light that told her he was no ordinary flock keeper.

“What will your parents have to say of this marriage, Rex the Shepherd?” she asked.

“Their answer is here,” cried Goosey Gander.

And behold, in the three ships sat three lovely girls, one singing in a voice of silver, one whistling as merrily as any blackbird, and one playing sweetly on the violin.

Rex cried out for joy. “They are glad, glad,” he cried. “See, they have sent the three most beautiful girls in Magic-land to be your maids-in-waiting. Will you accept them, Loribell?”

The Princess was well pleased. Such state was not common even in Fairyland. Rex was proud and happy, though he knew, too, how much it meant for his father the King never to see his son again for more than fifty-nine minutes at a time. And Loribell? Once again Goosey Gander had guided her to happiness.

She was well content, for ever after.



CURLY LOCKS

*Curly Locks, Curly Locks, wilt thou be mine?
Thou shalt not wash dishes, nor yet feed the swine.
But sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam
And feast upon strawberries, sugar and cream.*



THE Story Gnome seems to be feeling quite romantic lately. His last tale was a romance, and this one has more sighs and longings even than the story of the Three Ships, which had a very happy ending, didn't it?

Curly Locks was the fairy child of very sensible parents. You will know how sensible when I tell you that they brought the very first galosh to an Earth child and were always known as Mother and Father Galosh after that. They were responsible too for umbrellas and raincoats and other things to keep us warm and dry which they coaxed the King of Formland to send over to Earthland, where they were regarded with mixed feelings. And why the sponsors of galoshes should have a daughter whose head was covered with soft, flat golden curls, whose feet were slim and narrow, whose eyes were a mischievous brown, whose cheeks were pink as the sunrise, and whose step was as graceful as a flower in the wind, I can't tell you, but they did.

"Now then," said Mother Galosh to Father Galosh. "It is plain to be seen that we have a frivolous child. She is really lovely enough to be a maid-in-waiting to our Queen and per-

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haps she will be chosen. But you know my theories about children. She must learn to be useful as well as ornamental."

Father Galosh nodded solemnly. He was very proud of this beautiful daughter and sure that she resembled some one on his side of the family, but he agreed that Curly Locks should be trained to be useful.

By the time she was half past three she could button her own blue shoes. By the time she was half past four she could brush her own curls until they shone like water in the sunlight, and by the time she was half past five she could say the alphabet backward, which is a magic way of saying it.

Mother and Father Galosh were extremely busy whenever it rained on earth, reminding children to be sure to wear their overshoes when they went to school, or popping the idea of "Johnny, you must wear your galoshes" into some earth mother's head, just when Johnny was nearly late anyway. So they left much of the keeping of the house to Curly Locks. Just think of yourself on rainy days and you can imagine how busy they were.

Curly Locks would wash the breakfast dishes, sprinkle white sand on the kitchen floor in neat patterns, make a grocery list with a peacock feather which read like this, "daerb, rettub, sessalom," and trip off in her blue shoes to get the day's supplies. When Father and Mother Galosh returned from Earthland, they would find supper neatly spread, and Mother Galosh would peer around the house looking for a speck of dust which she never found, for Curly Locks, in spite of her beauty, was a very practical little person and really loved to keep house.

In between the times her tasks occupied, Curly Locks would play with the other fairy children, dancing, picking buttercups, and singing songs which Tom the Piper played.



THEN TOO FATHER GALOSH WAS FOND OF STRAWBERRIES

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

Her favorite playmate was Tick, the son of Tock the watchmaker to the Fairy Queen. He was a very neat fairy too, fond of doing things exactly so, a taste which he inherited from his father no doubt. As they grew older and the time came for the Fairy tests which made them into grown-up fairies, they decided that some day they would live in a neat little green house with red shutters and a silver-gray cat to lie on the doorstep.

But Curly Locks was by this time so very beautiful that she had other suitors from all over Fairyland. When the day came for the Fairy Queen to review Curly Locks' tasks and award her the ten-minute spell that all grown-up fairies can use, Curly Locks cleaned the Galosh cottage until it fairly shone, and made a pattern of watch wheels which Tick had shown her with white sand on the kitchen floor. It was all sweet and clean and the Fairy Queen was much pleased.

"You are such a lovely girl, and so tidy withal," she said, "that I would like you to come to court to be a maid-in-waiting until such time as you choose a suitor and have a home of your own to be mistress over."

Poor Curly Locks! This was a great honor, the greatest honor that could come to a young lady fairy. She looked at her parents. How proud they were. Even Mother Galosh shed an impractical tear and immediately regretted that she had not worn her usual dress of gray blotting paper. Father Galosh was swelled with pride until he looked like Wugg the frog. And most of all the Fairy Queen smiled so sweetly at the girl, the other maids-in-waiting looked so lovingly at her curly head that she nodded and said in a whisper, "I shall count it a great honor to come, your Majesty."

So off to the court she went, wearing her sweet glass slippers and a dress of spring-time green. There she was at once

CURLY LOCKS

surrounded by friends who praised her for her beauty and wondered at her industriousness. For she could not bear to be idle. She made lovely laces for the Fairy Queen and the other maids-in-waiting; she went into the kitchen and made delicious sea foam; and she often did the mending for the maids-in-waiting who disliked to sew on their own buttons, even though they were of silver sewn with golden thread.

All this time too she had offers of marriage, some of them from Princes, but fast in her heart was locked the image of Tick, the watchmaker's son, and of the red and green cottage with the silver cat on the doorstep that they had planned for so many years.

Poor Tick. Things were going badly with him. He became untidy and careless. He lost interest in his invention of a watch that would ring a little bell every fifty-eight minutes to warn the fairies who were in Magicland that they had just one minute more to stay. He thought constantly of Curly Locks, and it made his heart very sore to hear the stories of this Prince and that Prince all seeking Curly Locks' hand in marriage.

But he took heart when week after week went by and there was no word of Curly Locks' accepting any of these offers. He noticed, too, how lonely Father Galosh seemed in the evenings, and how even Mother Galosh seemed to miss her daughter, even while she spoke proudly of Curly Locks' progress at court.

In time Tick was able to work again. He worked and worked over his invention of the little watch and finally showed it to his father, who tested it in all manner of ways and found it perfect.

"You must carry this to the Fairy Queen," cried Tock, in great excitement. "Take it to her at once. It is a wonder-

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

ful invention that will save her any amount of trouble over careless fairies who stay too long in Magicland.”

So with a thumping heart Tick went to court. The Fairy Queen received him kindly, especially when she learned that he was a great friend of Curly Locks.

Tick explained the purpose of his watch to her and showed her how it worked. The Queen listened attentively and thought she had never seen a youth so blind to her beauty, for Tick kept casting his eyes toward Curly Locks, who seemed taller and grander and more beautiful than ever in her court frock spangled with star dust.

He saw, too, that other young men fairies cast longing glances in Curly Locks' direction, and his heart grew heavier than ever, for he had had some idea of speaking to her and asking her if she had changed her mind a great deal in the last few weeks.

When the Queen had examined the watch thoroughly she said, “This is a very fine invention and I think any one with a mind like yours should be free to do nothing but think of ways of improving Fairyland. Therefore I grant you from the royal supply house the material for any kind of cottage you may wish, and a supply of food and clothing from year to year, in addition to one new silver dollar.”

The whole court gasped and applauded, for this was a splendid gift indeed and made Tick independent for life. Even Tick was pleased for a moment and remembered to thank the Queen. Then he began thinking of all the differences between the cottage he could offer Curly Locks and the palaces she had at her command and he grew unhappier than ever. As he was leaving the court room Curly Locks ran to him.

“Have you forgotten me so soon, Tick?” she asked.

The poor lovelorn fellow burst into tears:

CURLY LOCKS

“Curly Locks, Curly Locks wilt thou be mine?
Thou shalt not wash dishes nor yet feed the swine.”

Curly Locks cast her eyes down and blushed.

“I will do everything about the house,” went on Tick.
“You need never soil your lily-white hands.”

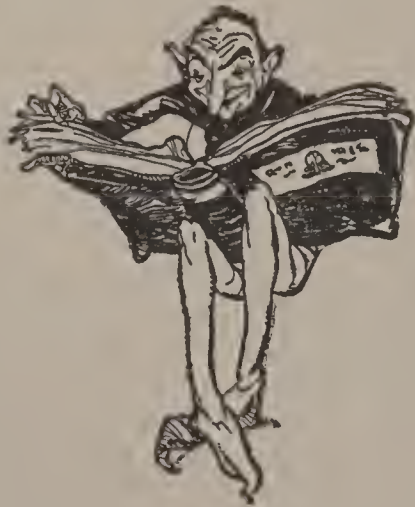
“I will be yours very gladly, Tick,” said Curly Locks.
“But I could never be content to be idle all day long.”

“Then,” cried Tick,

“You shall sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam
And feast on strawberries, sugar and cream.”

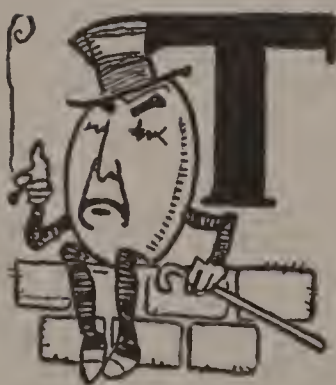
So it was. And everybody was pleased. Most of all Father and Mother Galosh who had missed their daughter more than they were willing to admit and loved to go in after years to stroke the silver-gray cat and admire the fine seams that Curly Locks sewed in the green cottage with the red shutters.

Then, too, Father Galosh was fond of strawberries.



HUMPTY DUMPTY

*Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.
All the King's horses and all the King's men
Couldn't put Humpty Dumpty together again.*



THIS is another story of Formland. Story Gnome came in mopping his brow early one morning and looking rather tired and fagged.

“Did you have an egg for breakfast this morning?” he asked.

“Yes, I did. Would you like one?” said I, hoping there was one left in the ice-box if he accepted my offer.

He made a face. “I never eat anything as fresh as an egg,” he said. I didn’t inquire into his diet, though I am sure it is as musty and dusty as he is, moth balls perhaps and things like that. I just sat and waited for the story I felt sure was coming.

“I’ve been reading that old erudite language of Formland all night,” he said after a little pause, “and I’ve finally found out about the first egg anybody ever ate and why. It’s very interesting—for those who like eggs.”

It seems that long ago, before she came to live in the Story books, the Little Red Hen lived in Formland. She was only an Idea then, as Mother Nature was not yet ready for the winged things to dwell on earth. She was diligent then as she is now, and laid her daily egg and reared her chicks in the



"GET A FIRE," CRIED FORM KING, AND A POT
OF BLAZING CHARCOAL WAS BROUGHT

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

way they should go. But she laid so many eggs, and so often had more than she could hatch at the end of a season that she began to wonder whether the only purpose of eggs was to make chickens. No one had even dreamed of an omelet then.

About this time the extra eggs began to roam around Formland, and, as they were among the most fragile of the Ideas dwelling there, Form King gave orders that every one should be very careful of them. He never wished an Idea to be destroyed until it had proved itself worthless or bad. Once he even had to turn his chariot out of the road to avoid crushing a group of eggs going home after a party.

Late in the season one day the Little Red Hen laid a very large and fine-looking egg. "You will make a big, hearty chicken child," she observed, looking at it as it lay in the nest, nearly twice the size of its brothers and sisters.

"Indeed I won't," said the Egg, strolling out of the nest. "My name is Humpty Dumpty and I expect to live a long time in this country before I'm changed into a chicken."

The Little Red Hen felt doubtful about the propriety of an egg being so impertinent, and one of her own children at that, but as Humpty Dumpty was a very large fine egg and one that she could be proud of, she let him pass. He went out to explore Formland, quite pleased at the way every one took care not to brush against him.

He lived in Formland many years and saw the departure of his mother who was summoned to Earthland by Mother Nature to take her place among the feathered creatures that began to live on earth about this time. Humpty Dumpty was not a very popular egg, he was so large and so arrogant that no one was very fond of him, but of course they all obeyed Form King's orders and never jarred him in any way at all.

HUMPTY DUMPTY

A long time, as we think of time—but really only a few days as they judge things in Formland—after the Little Red Hen's departure, a new Want came into Formland from Earth.

He told the King that the people of Earthland were tired of eating meat all the time and that the Mothers especially wanted something quick and easy to get for breakfast. He was not an especially big Want, but he was polite and soft spoken, so Form King told him to look about and see if there was any Idea at present in Formland that he might take back with him.

This Breakfast Want looked about a long time, but he saw nothing that he thought suited his purpose, so he went back to Earth quite discouraged. However, he returned in a week or so and looked about again. He was much larger and stronger this time and wore a morning coat and a white vest, striped trousers, and a high hat, which he felt was quite an impressive costume, as it was.

Every one was most polite to him and quite willing to help him excepting Humpty Dumpty. Humpty Dumpty jeered at the striped trousers and asked Want where he thought he was going with that high hat.

He did this sort of thing several times, and at last Breakfast Want, who really did not deserve such treatment, became angry.

Humpty Dumpty loved to climb on a high wall, seat himself there carefully, rock back and forth gently and shout impolite things at Breakfast Want as he went about his search for an Idea to take back from Formland for the Earth people.

One day Want said to himself, "I'll scramble that fellow off that wall some day if he doesn't watch out. Form King can't do any more than send me away from here, and it looks as though I'd have to be going back to Earth soon anyway.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

I'll get even with that Humpty Dumpty egg thing before I go, see if I don't."

So one day when Humpty Dumpty sat proudly on his wall, enjoying his own importance, Want slipped up behind him and gave him a great push. Off tumbled Humpty Dumpty and into a dozen pieces he broke, and he spread out into the warm sunshine.

"My goodness," said Want in alarm, "I didn't know he was like that inside."

A great alarm sounded. Form King came dashing up in his chariot and four. He called for his men, the wisest men in his kingdom, and they all stood looking at Humpty Dumpty.

"I'm terribly cold," moaned Humpty Dumpty, for all this time his shell had kept him warm.

"Get a fire!" cried Form King. And a pot of blazing charcoal was brought.

They applied the heat to the oozing edges of Humpty Dumpty and at once the edges began to grow white and firm. They turned the charcoal pot about and about and, as Humpty Dumpty grew warmer and more comfortable, he became a lovely yellow and white in color, quite firm and independent of his shell.

"He looks good enough to eat now!" observed Form King. He had been watching the process with interest, for although he counted Humpty Dumpty as one of his most troublesome subjects, he had, as I have mentioned, a great aversion to seeing any one of his Ideas destroyed. However, he did not care how often they changed their forms if they could become more useful that way.

"That is a real Idea," said Breakfast Want, who had been dreadfully sorry for what he had done. "Look!"

Humpty Dumpty, now perfectly cooked all over, rose from

HUMPTY DUMPTY

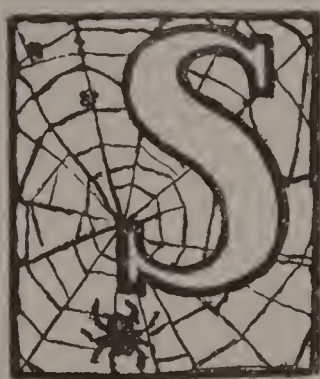
his shell and looked at his color scheme of yellow and white. "Now I'm a fried egg, instead of a bad egg," he observed. "I'm sorry to have troubled you so, Sire. Perhaps if I go with this Breakfast Want person down to Earth I can be of some use. I feel quite edible."

So off they went, Humpty Dumpty the first fried egg, and Breakfast Want, to visit Earthland. Here people soon found out how many ways Humpty Dumpty could be used, and although you of course eat your eggs mostly poached, or soft boiled, or in custards, as you grow older you will undoubtedly join that great army of men and women who always order the original egg, "Fried, on one side only."



LITTLE MISS MUFFET

*Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuffet,
Eating her curds and whey.
There came a great spider and sat down beside her
And frightened Miss Muffet away.*



HE should really have been named Miss Prim," said Story Gnome, speaking half aloud as he toasted himself by the fire one evening. "Yes, really she should have been called Little Miss Prim. I am very fond of neat children, but these superior ones that are so much better than their elders—ugh."

I was interested of course and after a few more remarks about the young lady in question, Story Gnome told me her history.

She was the child of gay, light-hearted fairies, both of whom spent much time at the court of the Fairy Queen. They loved dancing and jesting and all manner of good times and often went to Earth to whisper funny things to people who write and draw funny things for us to look at. And very good it is for us to laugh at times.

When their daughter was born her mother caught her up and cried, "She shall be named Molly, jolly Molly Muffet! There, how do you like that for a nickname, little sweet?" and she tossed Molly up in the air as fairy children are always tossed, though it is often very bad for Earth babies to be treated this way.



JOE
KING

MISS MOLLY MUFFET SCREAMED...MISS MOLLY MUFFET
DROPPED THE BOWL OF CURDS AND WHEY...

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

But jolly Molly Muffet wasn't the least bit jolly about being tossed. Instead of smiling and crowing she said "Wah!" and pulled the corners of her mouth down—so.

Molly Muffet's mother nearly dropped the baby she was so surprised. Molly Muffet's father stood on his head so he could think better about this strange thing. There just didn't seem to be any precedent for such a happening, so they laid the baby down in her milkweed-pod cradle and looked at her.

She was a sweet little thing, except for her mouth. It was puckered and had a slightly curdled look, nor was she at all inclined to smile at her parents. Father and Mother Muffet stared at each other for a long time, then they called in their friends. No one was able to offer them any helpful advice and they finally decided to begin at once to give Molly lessons in smiling.

They worked very hard but not a smile could they get, though she was good-natured enough.

"She might be the child of Evileye, she is such a little sobersides," exclaimed Mother Muffet one day.

At this the baby gave a very correct little smile, tossed her heels to just the correct angle, and gave the properest kind of crow.

Father and Mother Muffet were delighted and worked harder than ever at teaching their daughter to look happy. But the most they ever accomplished was a prim little smile and just the proper and judicious amount of gymnastics.

As she grew older she was really a trial. She never lost her temper nor acted naughty at all. She obeyed her parents until they were exasperated. If they asked her to dance she lifted her skirts to a discreet height, danced a formal step about the room, made her bow, and sat down.

One day her mother said to her, "Molly, I am so tired of

LITTLE MISS MUFFET

the way you always shut the door carefully. I wish you'd give it a good hard bang once that would shake the house."

Molly immediately got up, crossed to the door, opened it, and went out into the yard, giving the door a mighty bang. She returned in a moment to ask her mother, "Did the house shake, Mother Muffet?" and when her mother laughed until the tears ran down her face Molly said, "Why do you laugh at me? Didn't I do just as you told me?"

"Oh, Molly, little Molly, you have no sense of humor at all, have you?"

Molly rocked properly in her little rocker and answered, "Just as you say, Mother Muffet."

And yet she was a pretty child, with a grave kind of prettiness and a certain dignity to her little head, like the look your doll has when you do her hair up and put a long dress on her. People often complimented Father and Mother Muffet on having so charming a child, and they often said to each other, "She really is lovely, if she would only learn to smile."

At last the time drew near when she was to pass out of girlhood into grown-up Fairyhood and as both Mother and Father Muffet were great favorites at court they had hoped their daughter would become a maid-in-waiting to the Fairy Queen.

"But she hasn't a chance unless she learns to smile charmingly," said Father Muffet.

Molly herself wanted to please her parents but she simply could not romp, could not muss her dress, could not scramble here and there as other fairy children did. So Mother Muffet decided to go to Willowitch. Now Willowitch, who is very ugly herself, loves pretty things, so Mother Muffet took a spangled scarf bound about with bands of tinsel and wrapped it in a silver cloth and posted off to the little black hut in which Willowitch lives and weaves her spells.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

Mother Muffet knocked on the door and when it opened thrust the spangled scarf in its silver cloth into the scrawny hand Willowitch held out to receive it.

Then Mother Muffet said, "I have a daughter Molly—"

"Who simply isn't jolly," finished Willowitch.

"No, she never, never smiles the livelong day," agreed Mother Muffet.

"Take Little Molly Muffet and set her on a tuffet

Beneath the tree whose branches near-by sway," said Willowitch. Just that and nothing more.

Mother Muffet went home and went straight to Molly's room to get her little tuffet, which is an old word, meaning a little bench or chair without a back. This she placed under the tree outside the Muffet home and called Molly to her.

"You are to sit on this tuffet, beneath this tree for a while, my dear," she said to her grave little daughter, who, with a solemn nod of her head, sat herself down on the tuffet and folded her little hands meekly.

An hour passed and nothing happened. Then Mother Muffet, who was watching with Father Muffet, said, "The poor little thing. She looks so little and lonesome. I'm going to take her out some supper."

So she fixed a blue and yellow bowl of curds and whey, which is something like junket or very firm custard and is a splendid food for fairies, and took it out to little Molly Muffet, who sat uncomplainingly under that tree.

Molly thanked her mother and began slowly and neatly to eat that bowl of curds and whey, using her best company manners. In truth she had none but company manners, she was such a prim little girl.

"I almost wish she'd jump up and spill all the curds and whey on her clean frock, or take too big a mouthful, or do

LITTLE MISS MUFFET

something like other children do, instead of sitting there in that perfectly ladylike manner," sighed Mother Muffet to Father Muffet.

"Look," said Father Muffet to his wife, clutching her arm.

Down from the tree, spinning his way on thread of his own weaving, came a great black spider. Nearer and nearer Miss Muffet he came, his beady eye fixed on that bowl of luscious curds and whey.

Miss Molly Muffet ate calmly on. The spider swung himself slowly down. He passed the top of her head. He lowered himself to the level of her forehead, then he peered straight into her eyes.

Miss Molly Muffet screamed. Miss Molly Muffet dropped the bowl of curds and whey. Miss Molly Muffet jumped and ran and screamed for her mother and forgot all her manners for one glorious moment.

The next moment her mother's arms were about her. "There, there, my darling little Molly. The spider won't hurt you. He just wanted some of your supper."

Molly Muffet looked around. There on the edge of her blue and yellow bowl sat the great black spider greedily eating curds and whey. Molly laughed.

"The poor hungry thing—it was foolish to be so frightened, wasn't it, Mother?" and she looked up at her mother with the most charming smile in the world.

Then she looked down at her dress all covered with curds and whey, "But you don't mind this, do you, Mother?" and she raised her eyes to her mother with another charming, grave smile.

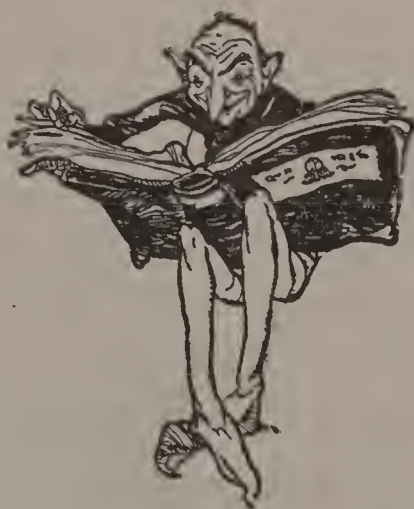
"Mind!" shouted her father. "I should say not. You can spoil a dress every day if it will only help you to smile like that!"

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

Molly looked sweetly at her parents, "Please, Father and Mother, don't ask me to be your jolly Molly. I'm just not made that way. But I can be your happy Molly, and I think I'm going to be able to see a joke from now on. It is funny for big me to be afraid of that comparatively small spider, isn't it?" And she smiled her grave smile again.

Her father and mother hugged her tight and they were all very happy. Later in life Molly Muffet grew to be a tall and stately fairy with long, graceful hands and a slow, dignified walk. But she was always friendly and kind, though never jolly, and it was always she who attended the Fairy Queen when there were matters of state afoot.

As for the spider, he ate all the curds and whey he could and then crawled back to the tree and soon after mysteriously appeared at the door of Willowitch's hut to ask her if she had any more little girls for him to scare.



SIMPLE SIMON

Simple Simon met a Pieman, going to the fair.

Said Simple Simon to the Pieman, "Let me taste your ware."

Said the Pieman unto Simon, "Show me first your penny."

Said Simple Simon to the Pieman, "Alas, I have not any."



YOU heard something about the Flighty Godmother in the story about Contrary Mary. She comes back again in this story of Simple Simon which Story Gnome brought to my fireside not long ago. She is the fairy who scatters absent-mindedness and carelessness about the Earth.

She seldom does tragic things, but she does cause much trouble, and, oddly enough, wherever there is trouble there is apt to be a story.

One day the Flighty Godmother set off in great haste to Earthland. She had been equipped with seven watches of Tick's invention, one about each ankle, one on each wrist, one hung about her neck, one bound about her head, and one held tightly in her left hand. That makes seven, so there was no danger of her overstaying herself in Magicland.

She was on her way to repair a dreadful mistake she had caused in Earthland the day before by forgetting to curl the other half of an Earth baby's head. She had wished this particular Earth child curls as her special fairy gift, and right in the midst of her spell to make its hair permanently wavy she had remembered something left undone in Fairyland and

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

hurried back, leaving the poor baby with six curly locks and six straight locks. Now she was on her way to curl the remaining straight ones while the baby took his nap.

En route to Earth she stopped to see her latest godchild, Simon. He was a dear little fellow and she loved him out of his cradle made of a milkweed pod into her hand, then absent-mindedly stuck him in her pocket where he went at once to sleep, as good fairy children always do when they are left to themselves. Off she flitted to Earthland, bent on giving that Earth baby the most beautiful curls in the world.

While the Flighty Godmother was curling the Earth baby's hair, Simon woke up. The air felt strange to him, and instead of crying he poked his head out of his Godmother's pocket to see what was happening. He saw so many strange and interesting things that he floated himself out of the pocket, down to the floor of the room. There a strange thing happened to him. He suddenly became the size of an Earth child five years old, and skipped out of the room, down the stairs, and out onto the road.

There he saw a crowd of little boys and girls all going in one direction. Wearing his cap with the red fairy feather he followed them, and at last came up with them. For some time no one spoke to him. At last a little girl said to him, "What is your name, little boy?"

"My name is Simon," he answered, taking off his cap with the red feather, most politely.

"Simon what?" asked the little girl, surprised and pleased at his politeness.

"Just Simon," replied the fairy boy, smiling at the friendly little girl. "Can you tell me where we are all going this bright morning?"

"Why to the fair of course," she answered. "See," and



JOE KING

A TEAR ROLLED DOWN HIS CHEEK. "ALAS, I HAVE NOT ANY," HE SOBBED

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

she showed him two new pennies clasped tightly in her hand.

"They are very pretty," said Simon. "What are they for?"

"Well I am not sure whether I shall buy candy, or an apple, or a ribbon, or a cake with mine. I should like to buy a pie. But I am very young for pie, Mother says." And the little girl gave a glad skip to show how happy she was.

"What is it to buy?" Simon asked.

"My goodness," said the little girl. "Don't you know anything? Say, listen kids, here's a little boy who says his name is Simon, just Simon. Has anybody ever seen him before? Maybe he's lost."

At this several of the children turned to look at Simon. They formed a circle about him and one of the older boys took up the questioning.

"What did you say your name was?" he asked.

"My name is Simon," said the fairy child, again taking off his hat and bowing.

"Simon what?" asked the big boy.

"Just Simon," repeated the fairy child.

"Where does your mother live?" asked the big boy.

Simon thought a moment. "In Fairyland," he said.

The children gasped. "He must be simple to talk like that, say his name is just Simon and his mother lives in Fairyland," said the biggest boy of all.

"Shhh—perhaps his mother is dead, and he is lost. Maybe they told him Fairyland instead of Heaven when she died." It was the kind little girl speaking again and all the children looked once more at Simon, then at each other.

"I think we should be very kind to him," said the little girl. "He is small for his age, and if he is lost and his mother dead, he is, he is quite a re-spon-si-bil-i-ty." She used this

SIMPLE SIMON

big word very proudly, having heard it when her mother read her a story the day before.

The children agreed that they must be very kind to this little lost Simon who was perhaps simple, and strayed far away from home. The kind little girl who had spoken to him first took one hand, and the big boy took the other, and they all went on toward the fair.

Now Simon appreciated their kindness a lot. But they seemed very strange and large to him. He was not very old and he missed his fairy mother. He began to wonder if he would ever see her again, and presently a tear stole down one pink cheek.

The kind little girl noticed it. "Don't cry, Simon," she said. "We will soon be at the fair and there we can have a good time seeing all the lovely things to eat, the fine horses, and the beautiful ladies."

Simon felt cheered at her words. Fairyland was full of beautiful ladies and he felt that perhaps his own mother would be among the lovely ladies at this fair the children all spoke of.

They came presently, skipping and jostling to the gate of the fair grounds. Inside were lovely striped tents with flags waving from their tops. There was a sound of voices and laughter, and the children quickened their steps.

And then there at the very gateway stood the Pieman. All his pies lay in neat pieces on a tray before him. They were freshly baked and smelled entrancingly good. All the children stopped to sniff and admire and some of their hands went immediately to their pockets.

"I don't know whether to spend my penny here or not," said the kind little girl holding Simon's hand. "Isn't that cherry pie just too wonderful?"

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

By this time some of the boys and girls had spent pennies for the treat and were um-ing and ah-ing over its goodness. And now came Simon close to the Pieman.

"Let me taste your ware, I pray good sire," said the fairy child quaintly.

"Show me first your penny," said the Pieman, who thought Simon looked very young to be away from home alone.

Simon looked about the group who by this time had turned interested faces his way. A tear rolled down his cheek. "Alas, I have not any," he sobbed, longing to be like these Earth children just for a moment.

The kind little girl looked at Simon. The children looked at each other. Several of them put their hands to their pockets, but the kind little girl was first, "Here, you shall have one of my pennies, Simon. Don't cry. You can spend it here if you wish, though you look quite young to be eating pie." She was a very responsible little girl.

Simon looked gratefully at her, then held the penny out to the Pieman. "Have you any magic pies?" he asked, for he had heard of magic food and thought a bite of a magic pie might help him to get home again.

"Well," said the Pieman, "there is this pudding-y or custard pie which some one told me just came here from Fairyland. Maybe that's what you want." He held out a slice of custard pie to Simon, who took it and had just opened his mouth to bite into it when there was a sound of sweet music, the ringing of seven little watch bells, and down from the sky dropped the Flighty Godmother.

"Oh, Simon, Simon," she cried, "I have been so worried about you, so terribly worried."

Simon leaped to her arms and magically became his tiny fairy self again and slipped into her pocket. From this safe

SIMPLE SIMON

place he looked down at the astonished faces of the children and the Pieman and smiled.

“Godmother,” he said, “these boys and girls have been very good to me. Will you give them each a wish?”

“Indeed I will,” said the Godmother heartily.

“Then for each child I ask seven and one bright pennies, and for the kind little girl there, and the big boy there, who held my hands, a penny they may use and use, but never spend.”

The wish was granted in a twinkling. The Flighty Godmother and Simon vanished back to Fairyland, leaving pockets heavy with new pennies behind them. Each child spent his seven and one, and the kind little girl and the kind big boy spent their one penny over and over again, yet always found it back in their hands, leaving a brother in the seller’s till.

But best of all they carried happy hearts the day long and went home without the tummy ache, though they ate of all the fruit of Candyland, and all the sweets of Cakeland, and drank of all the juices of Bottleland.

For this was a Magic Day.



LITTLE JUMPING JOAN

*Here am I, Little Jumping Joan,
When nobody's with me
I'm always alone.*



LITTLE JUMPING JOAN is a dear little, queer little character who came into Fairyland no one knows how, and who may, some day when you are lonely, come jumping into your mind to spend a pleasant hour or two. Story Gnome thinks she must have strayed from Earthland, an orphan child, probably, through Magicland with long jumps, and into Fairyland where she stopped and looked about her in surprise.

"I like this land," she said. Then she bounded into the air a yard or so and skimmed over a flower bed. "The trees are tall and pretty, the flowers are bright and say 'howdy, howdy' to me, and every one I have seen has a kind face. I think I will stay here."

So she started looking about for a house to live in. But Fairyland seemed to have no empty houses just then and Little Joan, who loved being by herself, didn't want to live with any one, though several people asked her. As she skipped and leaped about the country she came to the hut where Willowitch lived.

"Now what can this be?" she said to herself. "It is the only ugly place I have seen."



SUDDENLY JOAN GAVE A JUMP. THERE IS ONE THAT CALLS
ME, SHE CRIED, AND BOUNDED OUT OF SIGHT....

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

Willowitch thrust her head out of the door. "Who is there, calling my house ugly?" she demanded.

"I am Little Jumping Joan. Come out to see me. Let me see you," quoth the child, bounding into the air and down again.

Willowitch came out in great surprise. Every one else in Fairyland was the least bit afraid of her and here was a phenomenal child who danced before her doorway as light as the wind.

"But you are not ugly like your house," cried Joan. "Only your face is queer. But your heart, your heart is of pure gold, I can see it glowing. And your eyes are wise, wise and old, older than those green hills far away. I could love you."

Willowitch stared and her lips twitched. All her life the fairies had respected her, had feared her as much as was good for them, had brought her gifts, and had taken her advice in troubled times. But here was a child who said, "I could love you."

Willowitch felt her heart give a great bound. "And I could love you," she said.

They stood looking at each other, a child fair of skin, sleek and bright of head, with feet that twinkled as she stepped; the child and this gnarled, bent, toothless, wrinkled old woman who had forgotten more years than she remembered of her lifetime, and she could recall the days when the ageless Fairy Queen was young.

Suddenly Joan gave a jump. "There is one that calls me," she cried, and bounded out of sight. Over her shoulder she called, "I will return. I will return."

Off she bounded to a cottage where a fairy child whose parents were on a mission for the Fairy Queen sat lonely in

LITTLE JUMPING JOAN

its cottage. Its companions were all about their fairy tasks, and it was yet a very young fairy, just learning the first lesson of Fairyland, which is to wait patiently.

It made no outcry, but its heart stirred with longing for its mother. "She will be here soon," the child whispered to its heart. And then into the doorway came Joan.

"I will play with you," said Joan. "I heard your heart call, it is lonely and I came to cheer it. Your tasks are finished?"

"I have only one now," said the fairy child. "That is to wait patiently for my parents. I have waited patiently and soon I can go out to play, but the time is long."

So Joan sat on the floor of the cottage and they played with the sand on the floor, danced to the trill of a bird outside, and told each other secrets, until the sound of voices outside told them that the other fairy children had finished their tasks and had come out to play.

Joan danced to the door. "Now you are free," she cried. "Now you can play."

But the lonely child answered, "I like best to play with you. Who are you?"

"I am Little Jumping Joan," was the answer. "I only come when people are lonely and as you are not lonely now, I must go." Then she bounded out of sight with never a glance for the happy children, and the little fairy went out to its games and soon forgot Joan.

Very quickly Joan was at Willowitch's hut. "I believe you are the loneliest thing in all Fairyland," whispered Joan to herself. "Excepting myself. And I am always alone, save when some one is with me," and she smiled to herself.

Willowitch stepped out of her hut. "You did return?" and there was glad surprise in her voice.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

“I shall always return,” said Joan. “It is only when some one is sadder than myself that I will leave you.”

Willowitch looked at the sunlight, along the green fields, across the distant hills and down the years. “You are the first one who has ever come to me to help me, not to ask help for herself. I would take you into my hut but it is dark and unpleasant for a child. I would plant vines and make it magically beautiful for you, far lovelier than any other place in Fairyland, but I am under a vow to a power higher even than the Fairy Queen’s, to remain alone, ugly of face, helping only those who are brave enough to ask my help.”

The old woman sighed and looked at Joan. Joan smiled at her. “I know what it is to be alone,” she said softly. “I am always alone, when nobody’s with me.”

“That is great magic, child. Take care how you use it,” said Willowitch.

“I know it for a great magic,” said Joan. “I know that few can ever be alone, their dreams are with them, their hopes are with them, but I am always alone, when nobody’s with me—one calls.”

This time she hurried over the hills to the very edge of Fairyland where a poor belated fairy was caught with one foot in Fairyland and one in Magicland.

“I have sent a wish to the Fairy Queen that my poor left foot be released,” sobbed the exhausted young fairy who had made his first trip through Magicland to Earthland on an errand—he was taking a new tooth to a baby. “But until she can send me an answering wish and get word to the King of Magicland, I must stay here.”

“Then I will stay with you,” said Joan merrily, hopping back and forth from Magicland to Fairyland in a comical way.



LITTLE JUMPING JOAN

“No one has power over me. When nobody’s with me I’m always alone.”

She plucked flowers that the tired Fairy might sup nectar. She called a bluebird to sing for them. She told a gay story and recited a magic rhyme about bread and butter so the young fairy might not be too hungry. She made him forget his plight and the time until his release came seemed like only a minute. Off he hurried, thanking her and soon forgetting her for more important things.

Then Joan jumped back to Willowitch’s hut. Willowitch came out and watched the sunset. “Others’ hearts call me for a moment, but yours calls me always,” said the child Joan.

“I wish that I might take her to live with me,” said Willowitch to a great slanting shadow in the sky. The shadow shuddered. “But I will be true to my vow.”

“You must follow your vow and I must follow my loneliness,” said Joan. “But this much you may do: you may speak to me when others’ hearts do not call.”

“That much I may do,” said Willowitch. “I may love you and if there are some nights when there are no lonely hearts in all the world, you may sleep by my doorstep and I will watch over you.”

Joan nodded. “Some one is always lonely,” she said. “One calls, I will return.”

And off she went to brighten some lonely moment for some fairy in trouble. In time, as she grew stronger, she answered calls in Earthland too and then she was busy night and day, sometimes hardly seeing Willowitch for long weeks at a time.

They were fast friends. She asked nothing of Willowitch. Willowitch asked nothing of her. All the fairy children loved

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

her. She never joined in their games, but when they were sad or tired Little Joan came laughing in and cheered them.

And if you think there isn't much of a story in this rhyme ask Mother to turn the page. But some time when you have been hurt, or you are sick, or sorry for something you have done, wish for Little Jumping Joan. If your wish is a true one and you want to be brave, Little Jumping Joan will come. And she will help you I am sure.



LITTLE TOM TUCKER

*Little Tom Tucker
Sings for his supper.
What shall we give him?
White bread and butter.
How can he cut it without any knife?
How can he marry without ere a wife?*



LITTLE TOM TUCKER loved to sing. He loved to sing just as Tom, the Piper, loved to play. He was older than Tom, the Piper, and knew all the songs of Fairyland long before his brother musician arrived in that country to delight it with his playing. All fairies can sing, if Story Gnome can be believed. Even those who haven't lovely voices sing about their work and play and so keep themselves happy. "I occasionally sing myself. Tra-la-la-la," said the Gnome at the beginning of this tale.

Tom Tucker had a loud and husky voice. He sang in his milkweed-pod cradle, and seemed to think that the louder he sang the more beautiful his songs were.

"Really we must do something about this. The neighbors are complaining," said his parents when he was three years old. "Of course we want him to be happy, but we don't want to be deafened by this terrible noise he calls singing."

But whenever they tried to quiet him down a little he would grin at them and say, "Let me be happy," and when

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

any one would ask him what he wanted to do when he grew older he would say, "I am going to be the finest singer in Fairyland."

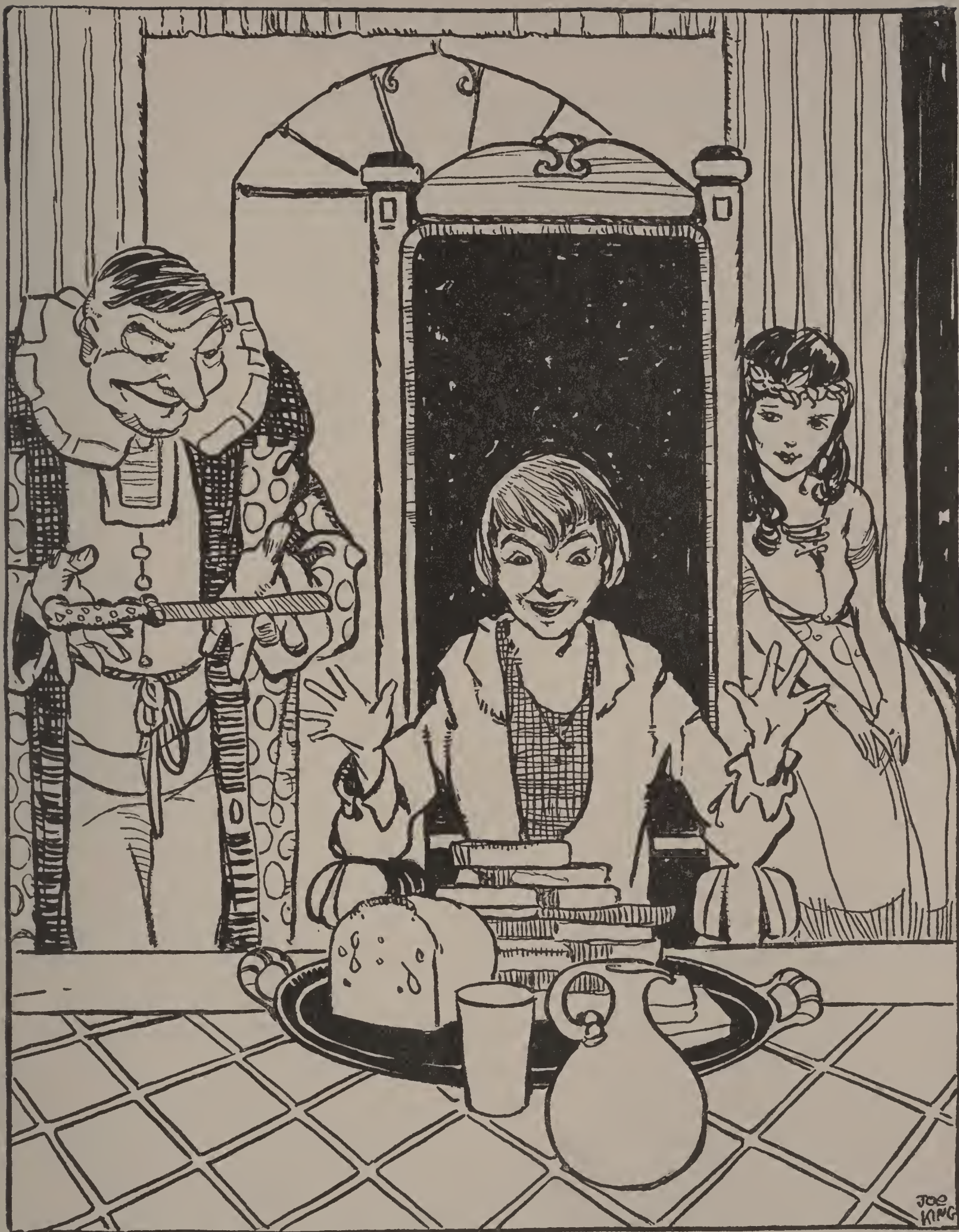
And if a voice like a factory whistle and a memory that could hold every song of both the old and new times could make him the finest singer in Fairyland, Tom Tucker deserved the honor.

He could imitate all manner of birds and beasts too. Once he and Wugg the frog had a contest. Wugg has great, powerful lungs and can sing, "Knee-deep, knee-deep," the night long. But when the sun came up Tom Tucker was still shouting "Knee-deep, knee-deep," loud and strong and Wugg's voice was a feeble croak. The listening fairies thought Tom Tucker was Wugg, until they heard Wugg give a final, feeble "Knee-deep," and plunge under the water to rest, while Tom Tucker went home to breakfast shouting "Knee-deep, knee-deep," at the top of his lungs.

Tom's father and mother wanted him to be a fine singer. But though they had teachers and teachers for him, he could never seem to learn that often the softest song is the most beautiful. Then, too, he was very young and sang the sorrowful songs of Fairyland with a gusto that made folk laugh at him.

So in time, as all perplexed mothers did sooner or later, Tom Tucker's mother went to see Willowitch. For a long time she pondered a gift for Willowitch and at last decided on a gift of silence. For three weeks Tom, feeling well and happy and strong and proud of himself, had filled all Fairyland with noise. So Mother Tucker gathered all the flowers that close their eyes at night and from them made a sweet tea which she gave young Tom to drink one night.

And there was silence, deep, blessed silence over Fairy-



"HE SHALL HAVE MINE," DECLARED THE HOST, OFFERING
TOM A SOLID GOLD KNIFE WITH PEARLS IN THE HANDLE

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

land, for Tom did not snore when he slept, and that was a mercy.

Then Mother Tucker went to Willowitch and said, "I have gathered all the sleepy flowers and brewed them into a tea for my son Tom. You will have twenty-four hours of silence. Can you help me to teach my loud singer to be a sweet singer?"

Willowitch gave a long sigh. "You deserve a reward. Let me think." For she had almost forgotten how to think, Tom Tucker had been so exuberant these last weeks.

At last she spoke:

"Send him out and let him sing,
Let him sing to earn his bread.
Turn him out of house and home,
Let him sing to earn his bed."

This was a hard saying for Mother Tucker, for she loved her son dearly and had always kept him comfortable. Father Tucker felt differently. "It will be a fine thing for the lad," quoth he. "Turn him out hungry and with a ragged suit as soon as he returns from sleep."

Fortunately for the plan Mother Tucker was summoned to court that night, or she might have mended Tom's ragged suit in the morning and fed him full of angel cake before he traveled out on this adventure. But Father Tucker gave his son a hearty slap on the back and sent him out. Tom Tucker was not a whit abashed. He was full of bravado and said, "This will be fun, Father. Don't worry about me. So fine a singer as I am will never lack for bread and a place to sleep."

Then he set off for a distant part of Fairyland, so distant that they had never heard his voice before. It was the land of

LITTLE TOM TUCKER

great castles where grand fairies lived who grew flower and vegetable Ideas for the Form King. The great farms lay far apart, and often the Princes and Princesses who lived there saw the Fairy Queen only when she came on her annual visit to them, so busy were they about their useful affairs.

Tom roamed all day through this green and rolling country and at night came in sight of a glorious castle, high on a green hill. He went toward it boldly. He knocked at the gate and a voice cried out, "Who is there?"

"Little Tom Tucker, who would sing for his supper," answered Tom.

"Then sing!" commanded the voice.

Now Tom had been saving his voice all day for this occasion, and, throwing back his head, he let out such a bellow that all the windows in the castle shook, and the roses in the garden trembled and shed some of their most beautiful petals. The mistress of the castle looked out of the window and, seeing her lovely flowers shake with fear at this great noise, immediately magicked Tom seven and one miles away to a valley surrounded by great hills, too great to be shaken by his song.

"They do not appreciate fine singing at that castle," said Tom to himself when he had recovered from the shock of being magicked seven and one miles in a moment. He sang a song to the neighboring mountains, who frowned back at him, and then went on his way.

Twice when he sought entertainment in return for his singing he was turned away by people who looked at him and put their hands over their poor ears. There began to creep into Tom's mind the idea that perhaps his singing was too loud for such a land. Then too, after three days of wandering about without food, and three nights of sleeping on the ground, he

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

began to feel weak and it was a real effort to shout out a ballad that could be heard a mile away.

On the evening of the fourth day he approached the most beautiful castle he had yet seen. It was very, very old and its gray walls wore a dress of green ivy. Its red chimneys gleamed and there was an air of love and light and cheerfulness about it that made Tom think longingly of all the comforts of his home. He was feeling rather sick, too, with all this fasting and walking about. So he approached the castle timidly and knocked softly at the great gate before the drawbridge.

“Who is there?” cried a voice.

“Tom Tucker, who would sing for his supper,” Tom made answer.

“Then sing, Tom Tucker. Sing your sweetest, for we are fond of music here.”

So, lonely, hungry, a little frightened at his lack of success so far, Tom Tucker sang a song of home, and into his voice, weakened and softened by his sufferings, put all his homesickness and doubt of himself.

There was a soft sigh when he finished. “Sing again, Tom Tucker,” and the voice was low and musical and Tom knew that a fair young girl was speaking.

So Tom sang again, this time a ballad of Fairyland that is one of the saddest songs of all.

There was a sob when he had finished. The gate swung open and a white hand was held out to welcome him in. “Come, sweet singer,” said the daughter of the house.

And now there was scurrying about. What was Tom Tucker to have for supper?

“White bread and butter, of course!” said the master of the house, who loved a good song.

This was a great honor and the bread was brought in great

LITTLE TOM TUCKER

piles to hungry Tom and a golden pat of butter beside.

And now Tom indeed hung his head. How could he cut and butter his bread without a knife? In his arrogance he had taken nothing with him, except his great voice that he thought so fine. He looked hungrily at the white bread and butter.

"He has no knife, Father," said the daughter of the house, who was lovelier than stars on a clear night.

"He shall have mine," declared the host, offering Tom a golden knife with pearls in the handle.

As he ate, Tom thought of all his boasting, of all his false pride in his loud, noisy voice, and before the eyes of the lovely daughter of the castle he felt very humble indeed.

When he had eaten and felt some of his spirits restored, Tom thanked his host. In other days, without waiting for an invitation, he would have begun to shout songs for them and if they did not approve have believed they did not appreciate him. Now, when the Prince and his daughter, the fair Felicity, asked him to favor them again with his sweet voice, he sang very softly and hesitantly. His memory brought back things his teachers had told him, things that he had scorned. He remembered sweet songs he had never liked because people laughed when he shouted them. For an hour he sang, gaily, sadly, all the old and new songs of his country. And the Prince and Felicity listened with tears in their eyes.

At last the Prince spoke, "I cannot believe it, but are you that Tom Tucker of whom rumor saith you deafen folk with your shouting?"

"I am that Tom," said the youth humbly, "but I have learned that there are those who know more of music than I do. From now on I shall treasure my voice as a precious thing to be delicately used to give others pleasure, not just to please my noisy self."

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

"I am sure you are the greatest musician in the world," said Felicity shyly.

"He can be. He will be I am sure," said the Prince. "And now I will leave you young folk to visit while I go to count the radishes that are to be red, the radishes that are to be white, the radishes that are to be round, and those that are to be long on earth this year."

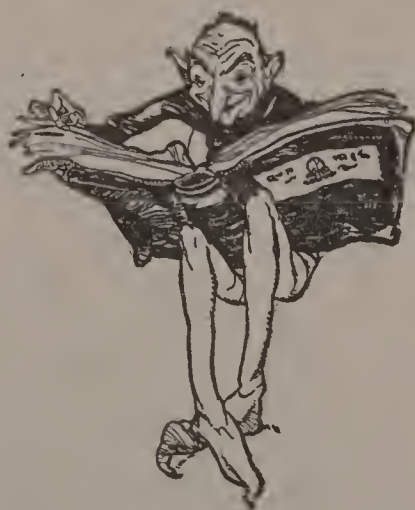
Soon rumor carried the word of Tom's reception at the castle of Felicity the Fair back to Fairyland. The story spread that Tom had truly become the greatest singer of all Fairyland, a sweet singer with a long memory and a gay heart and a kind one.

"This is the Tom Tucker I have always wanted," said his mother proudly.

Then came word that Tom would bring a bride home to his parents.

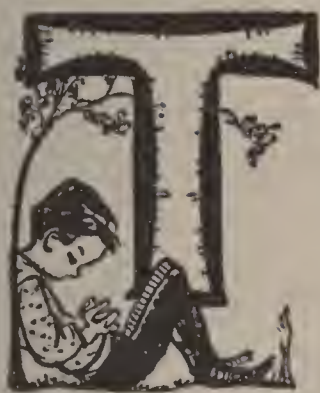
"But how can he marry without any wife?" asked Tom's mother.

She had her answer when she saw Felicity the Fair. Nor was her pride the less that it was Tom's sweet voice that had won him his bread, his butter, his golden knife, and his true love, Felicity the Fair.



SEE, SAW, MARJORIE DAW

*See, Saw, Marjorie Daw,
Johnny shall have a new master.
He shall get but a penny a day
Because he can't work any faster.*



HIS is a story of the terrible anger of the Fairy Queen. Story Gnome was at the court when the Fairy Queen's eyes flashed fire and he says that he himself shook before her wrath. "I found an old drawing which set me searching for the story, some of which I had forgotten," said the Gnome. "It was one of Georgy Porgy's pictures, but one that he never finished. No one, not even Georgy, could do justice to the glorious beauty of the Queen when she was righteously indignant. Looking at the picture there came back to my mind that scene and that time. I looked through all the histories and finally found the story, in which, as it concerns two Earth children, you may be especially interested."

It seems that long ago two Earth children were orphaned. They had heard of Fairyland and what a delectable place it was, and, hand in hand, Marjorie and Jacky Daw set out for Fairyland. They came to the edge of Earthland and looked across into Magicland, that softly dark country where things are only half way. Claspings their hands to form a circle they said, "Heart's desire, oh, heart's desire, come to us through flood and fire." And this is a strong magic.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

They landed in a moment in the heart of Magicland and, as they did not know the danger of staying an hour in Magicland, nor have one of Tick's watches, they paused to look about them. Before them stood a dark hut with a slow, lazy coil of smoke coming out of its high chimney. As they stood watching the fire, out came a little man, a Gnome of Magicland who was not wise and good as Story Gnome is. Years ago he had behaved very badly and as a result was sentenced to make charcoal for the Fairy Queen forever. In his hut stood a stove and an open hearth, and all day long and all night long through all the years the slow coil of smoke rose from his chimney. Twice a year messengers came from the Fairy Queen to take the charcoal to the castle, and to leave food for the Charcoal Gnome.

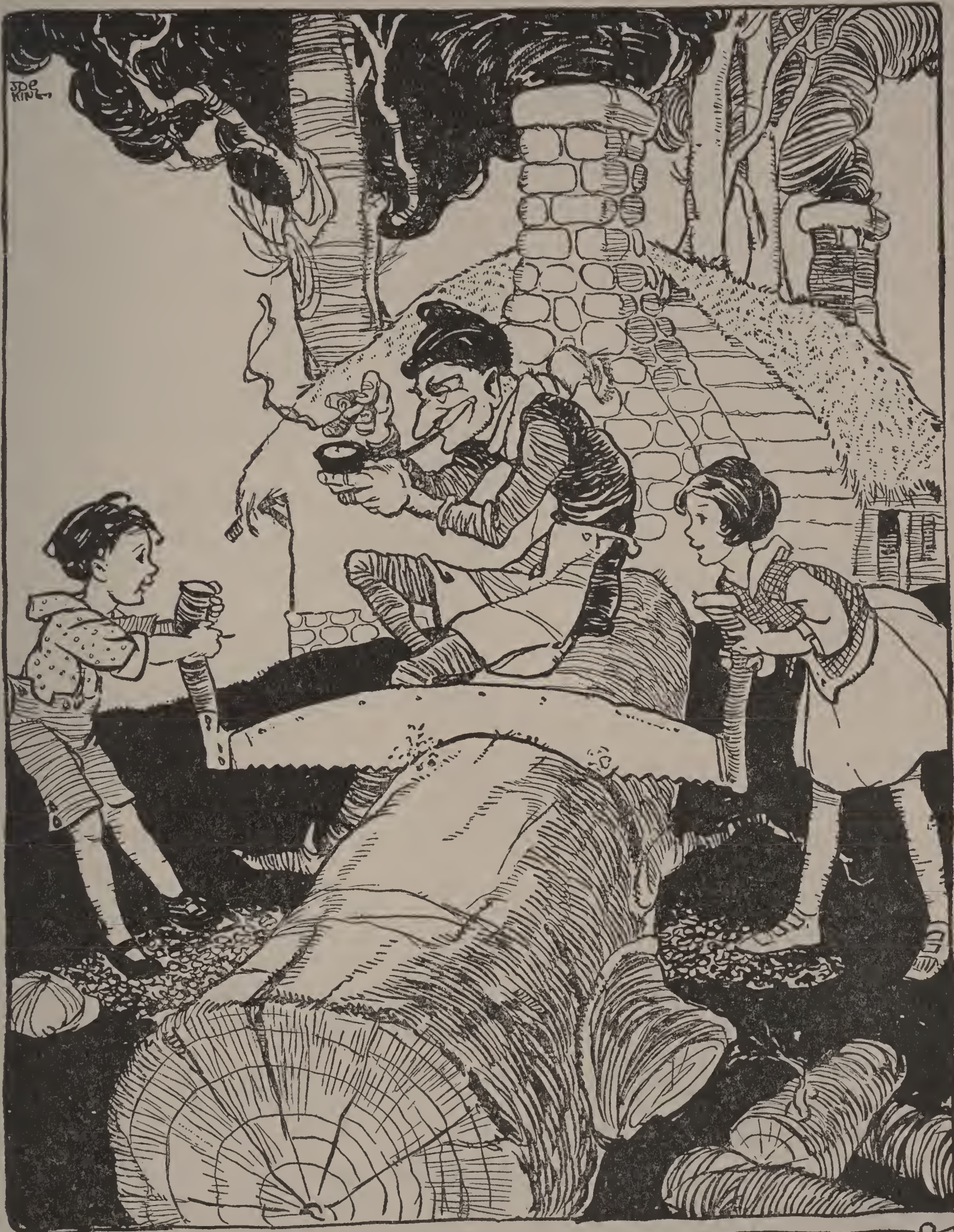
All day long he sawed great logs into suitable sizes for the Queen, put them on the slow grate and dried them into charcoal. He never had time to rest and after a while he forgot that he deserved this fate and began to chafe against this task appointed to him. Of late he had been especially angry at his fate and when he saw the two Earth children standing there so young and so sweet he had a cunning idea. Perhaps he could get them to come to help him.

So he spoke to them softly, "Good morrow, children of Earth. Whom are you seeking?"

"We are on our way to Fairyland," said Marjorie, who was the older and had to care for herself and mother her little brother Jacky too.

"It is a long way to Fairyland," said Charcoal Gnome. "Stop here and rest." He knew that if he could detain the children for an hour that they would be in his power.

Marjorie and Jacky thought him very kind and asked him what he did for a living.



CHARCOAL GNOME SAT DOWN AND RESTED FOR
THE FIRST TIME IN A HUNDRED YEARS.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

"I make the charcoal for the Fairy Queen," he told them.

"How wonderful! Don't you love working for her?" cried Marjorie.

"Let me help you make one piece," said Jacky, rolling up his little sleeve and showing a fat round arm with a dimple at the elbow.

Charcoal Gnome was delighted. If he could get the children to stay willingly there would be less chance of their complaining and his being found out and punished for keeping them from their hearts' desire.

So he took them into his hut and showed them the fire. He pointed out the green wood smouldering on the hearth, and showed them the magic saw with which he sawed the logs just so.

"I could do that I know," said Jacky. "I'm 'most as big as you are anyway."

"And I could help," cried Marjorie. "Watch, oh Gnome." She seized one end of the saw and Jacky the other. Back and forth they moved it over the green wood and as they worked they chanted, "See saw, see saw, Marjorie and Jacky are both named Daw."

Charcoal Gnome sat down and rested for the first time in a hundred years. The children thought sawing wood for the Fairy Queen a great lark and worked on and on while the Gnome rested or occasionally got up to fix the fire, much the lightest part of his work.

At the end of the hour they had been in Magicland, Charcoal Gnome rubbed his hands and chuckled.

"How would you like to work for me awhile?" he asked, well knowing that the children could not escape even though they tried ever so hard.

SEE, SAW, MARJORIE DAW

"It would be fine, though my back feels a little tired," answered Jacky.

"I'm not sure that we ought to stop here long," said Marjorie doubtfully. "We are on our way to Fairyland to live you know, and we mustn't get lost."

"Well, of course," said Charcoal Gnome, "all countries are different. If you stay here long enough to forget your Earth habits it will be that much easier for you in Fairyland."

"That is true," said Marjorie thoughtfully. "We will stay tonight, anyway. And please may we have our suppers? Jacky always has his so regularly I am afraid he will get sick if he has to wait."

Now here was something Charcoal Gnome had not thought of. His provisions were just enough for one, and how he could feed three mouths he did not know. But he brought out bread and butter and jam for them and decided to give them just a little less to eat each day until they were eating hardly anything at all.

At the end of a week he had woven a spell in odd moments about the yard so that Marjorie, wishing to take a little walk, found herself unable to leave the yard. She went to Charcoal Gnome and said, "I think we had better be going, Mr. Gnome. We are taking entirely too long to get to Fairyland and I think we will go tonight."

"You may go if you can," said Charcoal Gnome amiably. Then Marjorie, remembering how her feet had stood still at the edge of the yard, began to be a little afraid. She said nothing to Jacky, for he was still a little boy and must not be frightened.

And when she found that they were completely in the power of the Charcoal Gnome, she pretended to Jacky that she wanted to stay where they were and make charcoal for the

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

Fairy Queen. Jacky was willing enough, though he did tell her he was getting hungry from the skimpy meals they were getting. But being polite children they took what Charcoal Gnome gave them and did not ask for more. Daily their faces grew thinner and they grew more and more weary over the continual sawing that Charcoal Gnome required of them.

One day Jacky said to Marjorie, "How would you like to have us make some fancy pieces of charcoal for the Fairy Queen? I will carve them when we have finished sawing the wood at night and we can send them to her for a surprise. Then some day when we see her we can tell her that we were the ones who did it."

Marjorie was glad to have something to keep the fear from her mind and she helped Jacky carve some hearts and diamonds and a little dog from the green wood. Then, while Charcoal Gnome slept, they smouldered them as they had seen him do until at last there stood six perfect little charcoal figures ready to go to the Fairy Queen.

Marjorie made Jacky promise not to tell Charcoal Gnome, for she felt sure that, for some reason, he would object. She simply slipped the pieces in with the rest of the prepared charcoal and went on watching over Jacky, keeping him happy, sharing her scanty food with him, and never showing that her heart grew heavier day by day.

There came then the messenger from the Fairy Queen's palace. The Charcoal Gnome hid the children that day and, as they were looking very thin and he had just had a new allowance of provisions left him, he gave them a heartier meal than usual.

At this sign of approval on his part Marjorie plucked up courage to wake him after Jacky was asleep and say, "Please, please, Mr. Gnome, let us go to Fairyland."

SEE, SAW, MARJORIE DAW

"I will never let you go," said the Charcoal Gnome in a terrible voice.

Marjorie crept back to bed and cried herself to sleep.

In the palace of the Fairy Queen the Head Fireman was counting the supply of charcoal: "Seven hundred and seventy-six, seven hundred and seventy-seven, and that's all," he sighed, for the counting was a tiresome task, "Hello, what's this?"

He had found the six lovingly carved little charcoal figures.

In great excitement he took them to the courtroom. He craved an audience with the Queen at once. Kneeling before her he showed her the figures.

"Charcoal Gnome has never done this, Your Majesty," he said. "He must have in his power some poor creature who loves you."

"Search into this at once and report to me," commanded the Queen.

The Head Fireman magicked himself off to Charcoal Gnome's cottage and went silently about it. All was still within. Then he heard a sound that made his ears tingle.

A low sob. The breathing of a child asleep. Another low sob.

The Head Fireman peered cautiously in the window. There lay the two thin little Earth children, fast asleep, Marjorie's arm thrown protectingly across Jacky.

Back to the palace sped the Head Fireman. He made his report, concluding, "I respectfully suggest, Your Majesty, that he has trapped two children of Earth and is making them work for him."

The Fairy Queen's eyes flashed.

"Summon the court," she cried. Immediately the whole

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

palace was ablaze. Gorgeously dressed fairies hurried in. Not once in a century did the Fairy Queen show all her power.

Now in all her beauty she stood at the head of her court, on her head the crown of gold, in her hand the magic wand.

"We are about to right a great wrong," she cried in a ringing voice.

Once, twice, thrice, she waved her wand. "Earth open," she commanded. "Earth fly. And stand before me."

There was a great rending of the country of Magicland. The King of that country trembled, for he knew some one of his subjects had offended the Fairy Queen.

Up from Magicland rose the section of earth on which Charcoal Gnome's cottage stood. Through the air it sailed. Into the courtroom flew the cottage, and open fell its walls so that all might see.

Marjorie and Jacky opened their eyes on the most brilliant sight they had ever dreamed of.

Lights, lovely glowing colors, beautiful fairies who smiled kindly at them. And then in a voice of piercing sweetness, "Stand forth, oh Gnome of the Black and Evil Heart," spoke the glorious Queen.

Charcoal Gnome rose to his feet. In a clear, unfaltering voice he told the whole ugly truth of his dealings with Marjorie and Jacky, such was the Fairy Queen's power over him.

"Thou wicked one, thou vile thing, thou Gnome of Gnomes," she cried when he had finished. "Be-gone."

There was a blinding flash of light. The Charcoal Gnome's cottage vanished. Marjorie and Jacky stood hand in hand looking at a little black lump of charcoal in the shape of a gnome which lay at their feet, and from that to the tenderly smiling face of the loveliest lady in the world.

She held out her arms to them.

SEE, SAW, MARJORIE DAW

“Come, brave Marjorie Daw,” she said. “Come, Jacky. You shall have a new master. And you shall have a whole penny a day—for I won’t let you work any faster.”

She held them close against her magic heart and back into their cheeks came the roses, into their eyes the brightness, and into their hearts the happiness of which Charcoal Gnome had so long robbed them.



BAA, BAA, BLACKSHEEP

*Baa, baa, blacksheep
Have you any wool?
Yes, marry have I, Three bags full,
One for my master and one for my dame,
But none for the little boy that cries in the lane.*



HERE was once a fairy family that had a wonderful sheep. Where other sheep were white he was black. "Not a hard black like ebony," said Story Gnome, who was telling me this story one evening quite late, "but a soft black, like night, or like the clouds that come before a heavy rain."

It seems that one morning a little boy fairy came to live with the fairy family of this story, and while they were rejoicing over his coming they heard a soft "baa, baa" outside the door. They opened it, wondering if the very animals of Fairyland were come to make merry with them, and there stood a perfectly black sheep.

He bowed to them and then came into the room on his four clattering black feet and went to the cradle of the new boy fairy. There he made a second bow as though to say this was his master.

"Who are you?" asked the Fairy Father.

"I am the Grandfather of all the sheep," replied the soft black beast.

"Have you come to live with us?" asked the Fairy Mother.



CRY BABY WEPT AND RAN AWAY TO BLACKSHEEP. "IS IT TRUE THAT YOU ARE HOT AND UNCOMFORTABLE," HE ASKED.

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

"I have, indeed, with your kind permission," said the black sheep.

Fairies are not afraid to be different so, although there was not a black sheep among the neighboring families for miles around, Blacksheep was made welcome and sent out to wander about among the four-leafed clovers on the lawn.

Soon his fame was known all over Fairyland. Tom the Piper played for him. Tom Tucker sang for him and later made up the rhyme you read at the beginning of this story; and long, long afterwards, an invisible coat to wear at night was made for the Fairy Queen from his wool.

But though the family was justly proud of this black and gentle Grandfather of all the sheep, their baby was proving a sad disappointment to them. I have told you of Little Molly Muffet whose parents wanted her to be jolly. She never smiled, but at least she never cried and was merely grave.

This baby cried most of the time. His father and mother had all the doctors in Fairyland to see him. Every one was lovely to him. All his aunts came and sang to him. All his uncles brought him toys, but still, on every occasion when he was the least bit dissatisfied, he lifted up his voice and wailed. Of course I don't mean that he cried night and day. Simply that bumps and knocks and little disappointments that other fairy children took good-naturedly as part of their childhood sent this little boy off into weeping almost as loud as Tom Tucker's singing before that youth reformed.

He was quietest and happiest when he was with Blacksheep. They loved each other dearly and Blacksheep grieved to see his little master be such a Crybaby, for that was the name this boy fairy was known by all over the realm. Blacksheep loved his big master too, Crybaby's father, and he was sorrier than he could tell, in his sheepish heart, to have so much chagrin

BAA, BAA, BLACKSHEEP

visited on this family because of Crybaby, who was a fine boy to look at.

When Crybaby was three the time arrived for his training to begin. As I have told you, all the Fairy children have tasks to do, but before they are given sheep to mind, or cows to tend, or cobwebs to mend, or buttercups to butter, they must learn the first lesson, which is to wait patiently.

And the way of that lesson is this. Father and Mother Fairy go about their business early in the morning and leave their young child by himself. He may wander about the cottage and amuse himself, he may go out into the yard and talk to the flowers. But he may not go to the green to play and dance and sing until all the slightly older Fairy children have finished their tasks, which is three hours later.

Most Fairy children soon learn this first lesson. The three hours on the first day seem long and tedious. On the second day the young Fairy child usually learns to keep his thoughts and dreams with him for happy company, and by the seventh and last day the lesson is generally well learned and the young Fairy is ready for some visible task.

Well, the first day his parents left him, Crybaby yelled the whole three hours. The second day was worse, and on the third day his wails were simply ear-splitting. His parents were ashamed to have him cry so. Blacksheep almost cried himself at this strange disposition of his little master. And no one seemed to know what to do.

All this time Blacksheep had worn the same heavy wool and, now that summer was at hand, he began to wish that some of it might be cut off. But he wished only to give it to the Fairy family that had cared for him so kindly, and they were too unhappy, just now, to give any thought or time to him.

“I have a leave of absence from the Queen this morning,”

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

said Mother Fairy on the fourth day when they had left the cottage, followed by Crybaby's sobs. They looked back and saw that he had come out into the lane as far as he was permitted by the rules of Fairyland to follow them, and stood there leaning against the gate crying and crying.

"His trouble is that he will think of no one save himself," said Father Fairy.

"Yes, you are right," said Mother Fairy. "I am going to use my leave of absence to pay a visit to Willowitch."

Father Fairy soberly wished her luck and went on about his business.

Mother Fairy came near to Willowitch's hut. Little Jumping Joan was playing about the dooryard.

"I cannot go to your Crybaby though he is very unhappy," she said. "Because he likes to hear himself cry." Then she leaped into the air. "One calls," and she flitted off to accompany Father Fairy on his lonely visit to Earthland, for he was so used to having his sweet wife with him that he felt very heart-heavy this morning and Joan was just in time to cheer him.

"I have brought you no gift, Willowitch, save my sorrow," said Crybaby's mother sadly.

"A mother's sorrow is powerful magic," said Willowitch. "It will soon leave you and come to me and I will use it in my charms. But now return and ask Blacksheep for his wool."

Mother Fairy was too astonished for words. But Willowitch had shut the door and it was no use to ask her further question. She went home and waited for Father Fairy's return.

Together they went to follow the advice Willowitch had given them in the morning. Crybaby was out now, having a happy enough time with the other children, though they never dared tease him or romp with him a bit. Blacksheep stood

BAA, BAA, BLACKSHEEP

looking on, too borne down by his weight of wool to run about in this weather.

“Baa, baa, Blacksheep, have you any wool for us?” asked the Fairies in chorus.

“Yes, marry have I, two bags full. I have one for you, my master,” bowing to Father Fairy. “And one for you, my dame,” a bow to Mother Fairy. “And much that I would give to Crybaby, but I cannot give up any of it so long as he cries in the lane. I shall be glad when he has learned the lesson to wait patiently, for I am very warm and hot.”

Father and Mother Fairy called Crybaby in from his play.

“Crybaby,” said Mother Fairy tenderly, for she loved her little son, even though he had caused her much sorrow and trouble. “Crybaby, Blacksheep has a gift for us. Besides he is very hot and uncomfortable. He wishes to give us some of his wonderful, soft black wool, but he cannot give it until you have learned your first lesson, which is to wait patiently alone three hours a day for seven and one days.”

Crybaby wept and ran away to Blacksheep. “Is it true that you are hot and uncomfortable?” he asked, throwing his arms about the sheep.

“I am very uncomfortable,” said the sheep feebly. “In fact, I fear that I am about to be ill from the great weight of my wool.”

“Cut it off! Cut it off!” said Crybaby.

“I cannot,” said Blacksheep, “until you have learned your first lesson, then I may give you a whole bag full. I have one for your dear father and your dear mother, who have been so kind to me, too.”

Crybaby wept again. But, for the first time in his life, he wept for some one besides himself. “Poor, hot Blacksheep,” he said. Then he straightened himself up. “I will learn my

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

lesson," he said. "I will stop being a crybaby. I am done with crying. But, dear Blacksheep, it is not for the sake of the bag of wonderful wool that I will stop crying, but so that you may have that great load of hot stuff taken from your back."

Crybaby kept his word, and a week later there was a great shearing in Fairyland. The Fairyland folk all turned out, and when the last snip of fine black wool had been stuffed into a bag the Fairy Queen herself appeared.

"Let me see the brave Fairy Boy who overcame the habit of a lifetime for a friend?" she said, smiling at Crybaby, who smiled back at her.

"You will not cry again," she said sweetly, "and because you have learned your lesson so well you shall no longer be called Crybaby, but Merryheart."

And so he was called ever after.



SING A SONG OF SIXPENCE

*Sing a song of sixpence, a pocket full of rye;
Four and twenty blackbirds, baked in a pie.
When the pie was opened, the birds began to sing;
Was not that a dainty dish to set before the King?*



GIANT came to Fairyland one time," said Story Gnome, appearing suddenly at my window one morning. "Yes, indeed, a real Giant who could touch the sky. But though he was so monstrous big he had a heart as soft as jelly, and all the Fairy children loved him for the way he played with them."

"Come in and sit down," I said, putting out Little Red Chair, whose owner was playing in the sand-pile.

So Story Gnome did, and this is the story he told us.

This Giant who came to Fairyland was a great, big, jovial, kind-hearted fellow, who wanted to see the world. He wandered all over the Earth, took two strides through Magicland, which did not please him, and arrived in Fairyland, where the wondrous green of the fields and hills, and the soft blue of the sky, and the sweet faces of the children, pleased him wondrous well.

After wandering about for a few days, being careful not to step on any one, he decided to remain in Fairyland. But, being a very polite Giant, and so extremely large, he thought he ought to ask permission from the Fairy King to inhabit one

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of the mountains where there was a cave big enough to accommodate him.

So off he stepped to the Palace, which was about the only building in Fairyland he could get into comfortably.

“Good morning, Sire,” he said to the Fairy King, who was holding court that morning.

“Good morrow,” said the Fairy King. “What may be your name and what your desire?”

“I am Sixpence, the Giant,” quoth the huge creature. “And I would live in Fairyland forever.”

The King gave a great laugh. “I do not mean to offend you,” he said. “But tell me how it is that so great a fellow as yourself is named for so small a piece of money.”

“I do not know, sire,” answered the Giant, “unless it is that at the time I was born there was famine upon the Earth and sixpence seemed a large sum.”

The King nodded. “Perhaps so. But, at any rate, you are much larger than most of my subjects, and I must be sure of your wisdom and your goodness of heart before I grant you permission to live among us. Bring me, in seven days and one, a gift that will prove you are both wise and kind of heart.”

Poor Sixpence, he was not a very wise Giant, though he was wise enough to know that. And he did so want to stay in Fairyland. He walked about for two whole days, trying to think of some suitable gift for the Fairy King.

“Why didn’t I bring something from Earth?” he thought. He put his hand into his pocket, but there was nothing there save some rye he had picked one night in a rye-field on Earth. “The King cares nothing for rye,” he said, disconsolately—I hope you can remember that word—to himself.

Late the next afternoon some of the children with whom he had been playing said to him, “Why don’t you go to see Willo-



THE BIRDS ROSE JOYFULLY ABOUT THE HEADS OF THE KING-
AND QUEEN AND CAME TO A REST ON SIXPENCE'S SHOULDER

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

witch, Sixpence? She knows everything and will help you. But, no matter how silly her advice sounds, be sure to take it. She never makes a mistake."

Then they gathered a wreath of flowers for him to take to Willowitch to use in her spells, and off he lumbered, to tower over the little hut from which came green and blue and bright pink smoke, for Willowitch was busy.

He was afraid to knock at the door, his hand was so big. So he dropped the wreath down the chimney. Presently Willowitch stuck her head out of the door.

"What is it?" she snapped. For she was very busy.

"I, a foolish Giant named Sixpence, must take a gift to the Fairy King that will show him I am both wise and kind," said Sixpence.

"The King likes pie," said Willowitch. "The King also likes blackbirds," and, with that, she slammed the door.

"Now what did she mean by that?" said Sixpence to himself. Then he went off to his cave to try to puzzle out a meaning to this strange advice.

"The King likes blackbirds; the King likes pie. The King likes pie; the King likes blackbirds." Over and over he repeated the words and with each repetition they seemed to mean less.

He thought all night and in the morning had an idea. "Why, of course. A blackbird pie! That will be easy, for I can catch the birds with the rye I have in my pocket."

So first he made a great pie crust a yard across. Then he scattered the rye at the entrance to his cave and waited.

Soon the birds came whistling down to the feast and Sixpence caught them quickly, one after the other, and thrust them back into the cave, where they could not fly past his great bulk.

SING A SONG OF SIXPENCE

When he had caught four and twenty he felt that he had enough for a pie, and let the others finish the rye and fly back to freedom. Then he began to think, with pity, of the birds, caught in the cave, whose tender necks he must wring to make a blackbird pie for the Fairy King.

He took one in his great hand. It looked trustfully at him, for the birds are very tame in Fairyland.

"I cannot kill you," said Sixpence, putting the bird down and picking up another. This one, too, he put down, until at last he had decided he could not kill a single one of them. "And a blackbird pie I must have, for I am more resolved to live in Fairyland than ever," said he to himself.

Then he took the birds, one by one, and placed them in the yard-wide pie crust. They sat down to rest and nap and nap and over them he put the top crust, with plenty of holes for air, then he set it in the sun to bake.

When the crust was thoroughly done he set off to the King bearing the great pie on his left shoulder, steadying it with his huge right hand.

The King was playing croquet and he sent word to ask what Sixpence wanted.

"I have a pie here for the King," said Sixpence. "It is the gift he asked me to bring him before I settled down permanently in Fairyland."

"A pie?" said the King, a little puzzled, but still rather pleased, for it was nearly tea time. "Tell him to bring it in."

"What kind of pie is it?" he asked Sixpence when the Giant had bowed low and rested the huge pie on the green grass before the King.

"A blackbird pie, Sire," said the Giant.

"A blackbird pie!" exclaimed the King. "Wait, I must call the Queen," and he hurried into the house, almost in tears.

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“You must help me, my dear,” he said to the Queen. “That great fool of a Giant has killed enough of my beautiful blackbirds to make a pie a yard across. Come, help me banish him at once.”

The Queen came down into the castle yard with the King, but when she saw how kind the Giant’s face was she felt sorry for him.

Besides, he had brought them a gift, and whether they liked it or not they must be polite.

So she gave him her hand to kiss and commanded a great knife to be brought that he might cut the pie for them.

Sixpence plunged the knife carefully into the crust so as not to hurt any of the living birds inside, and when he had opened the pie the blackbirds all began to sing, delighted at the sight of the sun and the smell of the air. Sixpence laid the pie wide open and the birds rose, circling joyfully about the head of the King and Queen and coming to rest on Sixpence’s shoulder.

As for the King and Queen, they looked at each other and burst into happy laughter at the sight of this strange, living pie. When they could speak the King said to Sixpence, “What ever made you do this odd thing?”

“Willowitch told me, Sire,” said Sixpence, “that you like pie, and also blackbirds.”

The King laughed again. “Willowitch is a smart woman,” he said. “She knew that you were wise enough not to kill the birds I love. I know, too, from the way they perch about you, that you are kind. Go to your cave. It is yours forever.”

And off went Sixpence, accompanied by the four and twenty blackbirds, every one.

LAVENDER'S BLUE

*Lavender's blue, diddle, diddle,
Lavender's green.
When I am King, diddle, diddle,
You shall be Queen.*



“ARE we near the end of this book?” Story Gnome asked one morning.

“Yes we are,” I told him regretfully.

“This is the next to last story.”

“Oh dear,” sighed the Gnome. “I have told you so few of all the lovely secrets the Fairy Queen left me to guard in her Silent Library. There are many, many more, and even then I should always have one secret that I could never tell.”

I think his ultimate secret must be like tomorrow—always coming, never here.

Story Gnome began to hum, a dear little tune with a lilt in the middle and a period at the end—a sort of happy-ever-after song. “That is the music that Tom the Piper wrote to the old rhyme,” he said. “He wrote it for Fleurette—look!”

I followed his glance to my garden and there dancing in the breeze were all my lavender flowers aglow. They had heard the song Story Gnome hummed and danced for happy memory. I watched them while Story Gnome told this next-to-last story.

Long years ago, on the soft border of Fairyland, there was a soft enchanted garden. In it grew all the flowers that are not proud. Mignonette, lavender, wild roses, honeysuckle, sunflowers, sweet peas, but not the haughty red rose, nor the flaunting orchid. And in time all the flowers began to wish. They wished for a friend, some one who would love them and pluck off their withered leaves, and give them water when they were thirsty. And as all wishes come true in time, if we wish long

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

enough and truly enough, there came to this garden, born of their wishes, Fleurette.

The Fairy Queen had heard the wishes of the flowers in the lonely garden and granted them Fleurette, but on the day before she came to be their friend and keeper, the Queen talked earnestly to the flowers.

“You must know,” she said, “that this child I send you is born of the enchantment of your wishes. She may never leave the garden. And you must keep her happy.”

The flowers promised, and when they woke in the morning, there, sleeping under the wild rose bush, lay Fleurette. She wore a straight, green dress and her face was like all the honeyed flowers that grow. Her feet were bare and her hair was free for the wind to whisper in. She opened her eyes and smiled about her. Then she stood and made a quaint bow.

“Good morning, my children,” she said. “I have come to care for you, and I hope you will come to care for me.”

The flowers bowed and laughed softly at this tiny joke.

Then Fleurette—her name means “Little Flower,” and may still be found in the French tongue—went all about her enchanted garden, touching this flower, nodding to that one, loving them all.

Lastly she stopped by the bed of sweet lavender. “You are little and sweet,” she said. “But you are sturdy, too. Because you have waited patiently until the last you shall be my very own posy,” and she plucked a stalk of lavender and thrust it in her hair.

“Lavender’s blue, diddle, diddle,
Lavender’s green,” she sang.

So the years flew over her head. So swiftly that she scarcely knew they passed. And how she improved that wild and lonely



LAVENDER'S BLUE, DIDDLE DIDDLE, HE SANG, "LAVENDER'S GREEN."

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

garden. She planted the buttercups in one-pound squares, which is a magic way to plant them. The daffodils were all quite daffy and learned to laugh at the wind which they had one time feared. And the primroses were as prim and rosy as Miss Molly Muffet herself.

Then one day as she sang to her flowers and they smiled back at her, she heard a faint, sweet music borne on the wind. She had never seen another person, for this garden was in that part of Fairyland where all is simple and alone. The music ceased and she went back to her careful tending of the flowers. As she stood by the bed of lavender, singing the song that was specially theirs, she saw a shadow.

“Who are you?” she called fearlessly in her sweet, high voice.

“I am Tom the Piper,” answered the comely youth who had cast the shadow over Fleurette’s lavender bed. “I can play that tune you were singing,” and he put his pipe to his lips and played the little melody over and over, with trills and rills, and high notes and low, until all the garden was dancing and Fleurette had much ado to keep her own feet still.

“And did you come to see my children?” she asked, when he had finished playing and received her thanks. “These flowers are my children. This garden is my nursery. Day by day I make their beds and keep them happy. And once a year I send a posy to the Fairy Queen. Have you ever seen her?”

“That I have,” said Tom the Piper. “Many times, and played for her, too.”

“Oh, tell me of her!” cried Fleurette.

So Tom the Piper talked of all the folk of Fairyland, and while he talked drank in the loveliness of Fleurette’s face. Until this very time Tom had loved his music and given it all his heart. Now it seemed that nothing mattered save the smile

LAVENDER'S BLUE

of this sweet girl child, and to her smile he made a lovely song.

Reluctantly at last he went away, leaving a song in Fleurette's heart. Often and often he returned to spend sunny hours with Fleurette and her children. Then one day he spoke his heart:

"Fleurette, Little Flower, will you marry me and come with me to live at the court of the Fairy Queen?"

Fleurette looked at him, then shook her head. "I am very fond of you, Tom the Piper, but I cannot go. I belong here with my flowers. I am no grand lady. Why," here she laughed her merry laugh, "I haven't even a pair of shoes," and she held out her bare white feet.

"I can buy you golden shoes, and slippers all of glass," said Tom. "You shall have dresses made of moonmist, and a cap of silver stars for your sweet yellow hair."

Fleurette sighed a little sadly. "No, Tom the Piper. I may not leave my garden. I was born of the wishes of my children the flowers, and here I must stay."

Then Tom went sorrowfully away. He laid his pipe upon the shelf and for days sat pensively at home thinking of Fleurette. No one could coax from him a merry note, though sometimes in the night Tom would play music that brought tears from the distant listening stars. Day by day he grew paler and thinner and felt his heart within him growing heavier. At last one night he felt it break and then he laid his pipe away for good.

Now, all these days Fleurette had thought longingly of him. She tended her flowers and tried to be merry with them, but her heart was with Tom. The flowers understood and sorrowed too, for they loved to dance to Tom's piping. They knew he never played at all now, for the wind brought them no sweet echoes from his pipe.

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At last one morning Lavender spoke, "As I am both blue and green, Fleurette, I feel your young man needs a tender wish."

So Fleurette, happy to be able to do anything for Tom, whom she loved, sat down and sent him a thousand tender wishes. They arrived just as his heart was breaking clear in two, and in that very instant some of the broken pieces began to heal.

Tom got to his feet, "I will go to Willowitch," he said. And off he went, taking his pipe, that he might give her some songs to use in her spells.

He arrived at her hut and began to play. Jumping Joan capered about in time to his music and after a time Willowitch peered out the door and spoke to Tom.

"Go to your kingdom," she said.

That was all, and after a time Tom realized it were better to go home and think about what the wise old lady had said, rather than wait for more.

"I have no kingdom," he said to himself. "I wouldn't know what to do with a kingdom if I had one." And all night long he puzzled over the words.

That same night Fleurette made a little spell. She took nectar from the honeysuckle and a leaf from the lavender. She lit it with the glow from a firefly's lamp, and by this magic light she saw the crack in Tom's heart. She wept until morning.

With the first sunbeam she came to her flowers and spoke to them in their beds.

"Dear children," she said. "I know that I may not leave you. But the heart of the merry piper, who has pleased us all, is breaking. What can we do?"

"Let him come to live with us," cried Sweet Lavender.

LAVENDER'S BLUE

All the flowers clapped their hands and a white butterfly flew off excitedly to carry Tom the invitation. But he stopped to dally with a violet and never arrived.

Now, just as the flowers clapped their hands and sent their wishes to Tom to come to live with them, Tom's heart healed. He laughed softly to himself and took down his pipe.

"My kingdom is a maiden's heart, sweet heart, sweet heart," he sang. Then he put his pipe to his lips and stepped out across the morning dew to Fleurette's garden.

Now Fleurette was shy as she was sweet and she felt she never could tell Tom what it was she truly wanted him to do, but she went about her duties in the garden more hopefully than before.

Suddenly she looked up. There was a burst of merry, gladsome music. Tom's shadow fell again across her bed of lavender and Tom looked down at her with gay tenderness.

"Lavender's blue, diddle, diddle," he sang.

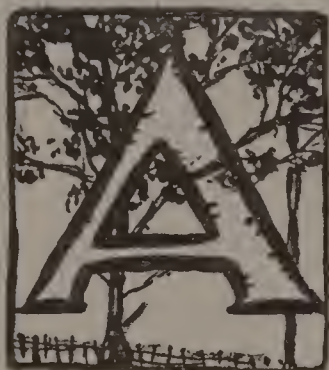
"Lavender's green."

Then he took her face between his hands, "Now I am King, diddle, diddle. You shall be Queen."

And so they dwelt content in Fleurette's garden. Tom, the King of Fleurette's heart, and Fleurette, Queen of his. Nor did they ask a greater kingdom.

HUSH-A-BYE, BABY

*Hush-a-bye, baby,
In the tree top.
When the wind blows,
The cradle will rock.
When the bough breaks, the cradle will fall;
Down comes baby, cradle and all.*



AND this is the last story, for now. Story Gnome wept when he finished it, and sent you his love. "I could hardly decide what story to tell you for the last one in the book," he said. "There are so many lovely stories, so many wonderful secrets, that it was hard to choose. But I thought you would like to know the story of the Fairies' lullaby. They sang it for many years to their babies and still sing it in the Magic Books. Mother Goose sang it years ago in England to the Children Who Lived in the Shoe. And now I shall tell the story to you, and then leave you for a little while."

Once there was a Fairy Mother who had a sweet, sweet baby. She and the baby's father both loved it dearly and never left it for an instant, it was so tiny and helpless. They were proud as proud of their child, and rather pitied their friends in the neighborhood, none of whom had any children. By day Mother Fairy sang to her baby and cared for it, bringing it smiles and happy wishes from its Father, who was, of course, busy, as Fairies always are busy. By night Father Fairy rocked



BIRDS CAME AND PEEPED AT THIS SWEET FAIRY CREATURE
AND A BUTTERFLY FLUTTERED UP TO SAY "HOWDY, HOWDY."

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

the baby, or told it stories in rhyme, or watched it while it slept. They often talked of how fine it would be for the baby to learn its lesson of waiting patiently and then to have the loveliest woolly lamb in Fairyland to care for.

And then one morning a dreadful thing happened. There was a tap at the door and before the Fairy Mother could call "Come" in skipped the Flighty Godmother. She dashed in, laid a large white envelope down on the table, said "How's the-baby-kiss-it-for-me," in one breath, like that, and skittered out again.

Mother Fairy knew, from the golden seal on the envelope, that it held a summons from the Fairy Queen. She dared not open it until Father Fairy came home. She feared it held an order for some mission for the Queen, though she had never heard of a young father being ordered away from his tiny baby. She never dreamed that it concerned herself, for in Fairyland no mother ever dreams of leaving her baby until he is old enough for the first lesson.

So, holding their breath, they opened the letter just as soon as Father Fairy came in. It was an invitation to a ball at the Palace of the Fairy Queen and was for that very night. No one ever dreams of refusing an invitation to the Palace, and yet how could they leave their dear, dear baby.

Of course you have guessed that the Flighty Godmother had made one of her usual mistakes and that the invitation wasn't meant for this Father and Mother Fairy at all. But there it was. And they had to go. And they couldn't leave the baby.

"I'm going straight to Willowitch," declared the Mother Fairy.

"Perhaps she'll send Jumping Joan to stay with Baby," said the Father Fairy.

HUSH-A-BYE, BABY

“Oh my, no,” said the Mother Fairy. “Our baby is neither lonely nor unhappy. Jumping Joan would be off in a moment to some lonely soul.”

So the Fairy Mother took a soft kiss from the baby to give to Willowitch for a present, and hastened away.

Willowitch fondled the little kiss in her bony hand and then cuddled it close to her heart. At last she said, “Ask the Wind, the warm, spring Wind,” and that was all.

So the Mother Fairy went home and told the Father Fairy what Willowitch had said. Hand in hand they stepped to the door of their house. They called the Wind.

“Wind, oh Wind, so soft and slow,
Where must our dear baby go?”

And the Wind answered :

“In the tree top, high so high
Where I’m always passing by.”

Then the Wind, who was of Spring and very gentle and kind, stopped blowing to talk to the young parents.

“I am done with the bluster of March,” he said. “And I am not ready for the strong winds of Summer. Let me have your baby in her milkweed-pod cradle, and I will rock her softly while you are at the ball.”

Back into their house stepped the Fairies and put on their baby a sweet-pea bonnet and a dress of thistle-down. She smiled at them and when they carried her into the twilight she held up her hand for the caress of the Wind.

Wind stopped and took the milkweed-pod cradle up, up, up to the very tree top. There he lodged her safely among

MOTHER GOOSE SECRETS

the peach blossoms, near the nest of a swallow, who had builded on a neighboring branch. Birds came and peeped at this sweet Fairy creature, a butterfly fluttered up to say "howdy, howdy," and a bee stopped and took one of his busy moments to bring her a drop of nectar.

All night long the Fairy Father and Mother tripped a measure at the Fairy Queen's ball. When the cock had crowed thrice they sped homeward, for no Palace balls are ever over before dawn. There, rocking gently in the tree top, was their baby, gurgling softly to the Wind, who had thoroughly enjoyed himself that night long.

And now came the question of how Baby was to come down from her nest in the tree top. Wind had lodged her quite securely in the fork of a slender branch. He was afraid to lift her quickly for fear of spilling her out. The tree was slim and young, a peach tree in its first blooming, and neither Father nor Mother Fairy dared climb it to get their daughter. They stood there in great perplexity, looking up at her.

Then the Tree began to speak:

"Let the Wind come to me now,
Bend and break and take my bough."

Father and Mother Fairy looked at each other. It seemed dreadful to rob Tree of a branch, but they must have their precious baby.

"It will not hurt me," said Tree, with a Springtime laugh. "I have loved having Baby and so has Wind."

So Wind came by and broke the branch and floated it down to the ground, light as a thistle seed, carrying the cradle and the baby safely to Mother and Father Fairy.

The story spread through Fairyland. The Fairy Queen

HUSH-A-BYE, BABY

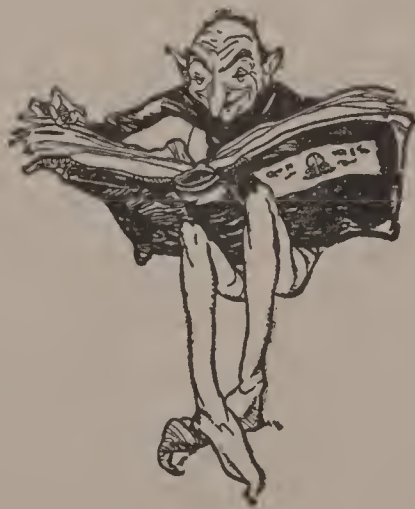
brought the Tree her thanks and spoke them to the Wind. The Flighty Godmother came in tears to apologize for her error. And Baby slept soundly through it all.

Forever after, when Fairy Fathers and Mothers had to leave their babies alone they spoke to Wind, who floated the tiny cradles to the tree top, lodged them there on slim twigs, and when the time came, floated the babies back to Earth in a nest of leaves and flowers.

And that is the story of the Fairies' Lullaby.

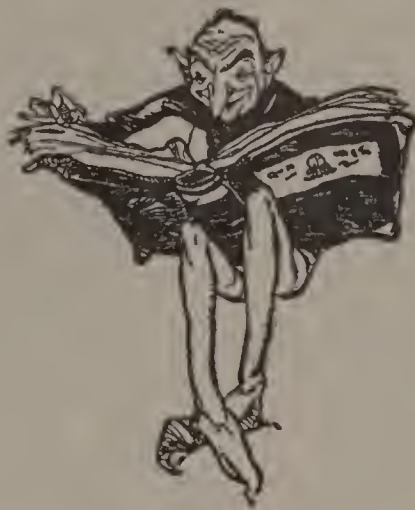
Hush-a-bye, baby,
In the tree top.
When the wind blows,
The cradle will rock.
When the bough breaks, the cradle will fall;
Down comes baby, cradle and all.

And so, goodnight!

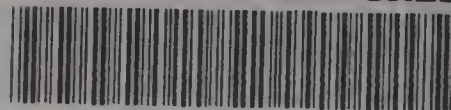


Now, on the next page, Barbara W. Bourjaily has a secret of her very own to tell you.

Here is her own secret: "Of course all you children remember that the Story Gnome said on page one that no matter how many secrets he told, there would always be more secrets left for him to tell. We all know how nice it is to have a secret and so I am going to get the Story Gnome to tell me another book of Mother Goose Secrets in a little while."



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